

Wahid ousted; Megawati new Indon president

STORY
BELOW, COL. 2

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No talking in the rain for Cabinet, protesters

BY PHILIP TUBEZA

AND ANDREA TRINIDAD-ECHAVEZ

TOP officials of the Macapagal administration were ready to listen. But leaders of militant groups weren't ready to let such a dialogue spoil their planned protest on the occasion of President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address.

There were polite handshakes but no exchange of words.

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★★

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P13

Hail, hail
'sunshine'
Joe's here

BY V. CONTRERAS

NEW House Speaker

Jose de Venecia: the

face that launched a

thousand sobriquets.

A number of

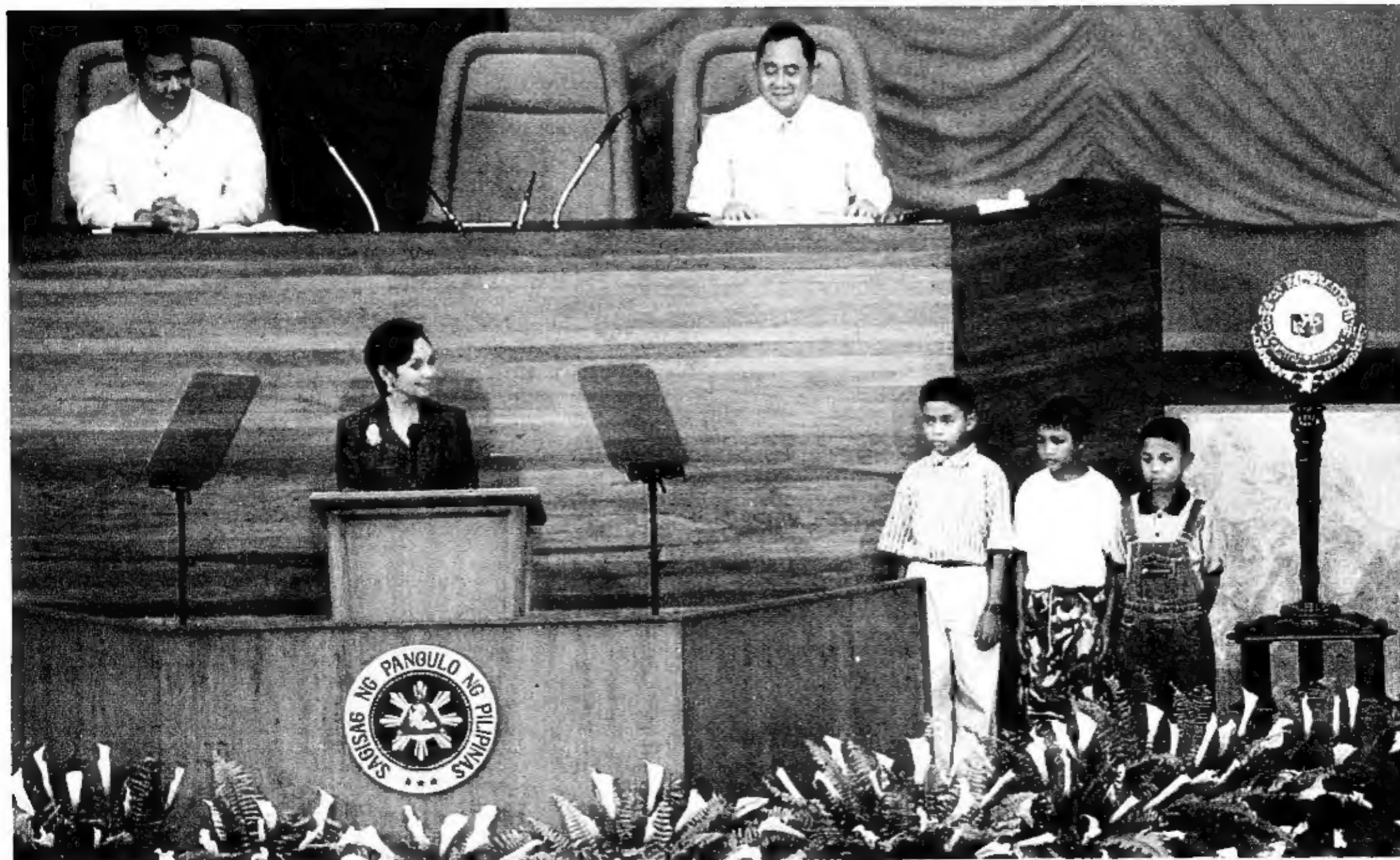
congressmen yester-

HAIL/ A14

DAMI KONG
PALAYAW



Jobs, housing, food ...



NEARLY upstaging President Macapagal-Arroyo at the opening of the 12th Congress, 3 children from Payatas, Jomar Pabalan, Jason Vann Banogan, Erwin Dolera give poverty a face in the President's Son.

PLAIN TALK

- Farms as loan collateral
- 1,000 rolling stores to sell rice at P14 a kilo
- Farmers to import rice directly
- To cut in half prices of medicines frequently bought by public
- This year half a million urban poor families will be insured with Philhealth
- Schoolhouse in every barangay
- P20B for housing for poor
- To cut in half number of signatures needed by gov't agencies
- Housing permits need only 45 approvals instead of 188
- Create departments of housing, IT and telecommunication
- Interconnect Smart, Globe property
- Continue liberalizing airline industry
- P500M for community projects in conflict areas in Mindanao; revive the East Asian Growth Area
- Hold office in agri department until a million jobs created
- Emergency jobs for out-of-school youth

'I'm not miracle worker but I'll do my best'

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA

"I'M NOT a miracle worker," President Macapagal-Arroyo declared toward the end of her first State of the Nation Address at the opening of the 12th Congress yesterday after unveiling her administration's four-point program to fight mass poverty that would require no less than divine intervention to win.

"I am not a miracle worker but I will do what is right. I will do my best. Let us all do what is right, what is best and God will do the

rest," Ms Macapagal said in her speech, which lasted over an hour and was interrupted 86 times by applause.

The daughter of the "Poor Boy from Lubao," as her late father President Diosdado Macapagal was called, said she was taking on her shoulders the duty of pursuing the fight against poverty.

In the 65-minute-long address, which was also marked by what she called "plain talk" and "common sense," President Macapagal promised concrete results within the year.

Her audience gave her its long-

est applause when she reiterated her support for the fair and speedy trial of former President Joseph Estrada.

"If there were times," the President said, "that I showed concern for the personal circumstances of the former President, it is not a sign of diminished determination to see justice done."

"But as I sometimes extend a hand covered by a velvet glove, inside it is an iron hand where jus-

JOBS/ A14

Drilon by 1 vote, JDV by landslide

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM
VOLT CONTRERAS
AND JULIET L. JAVELLANA

WHILE Rep. Jose de Venecia readily won what was probably the most one-sided race for the Speakership in the history of the Philippine Congress, Sen. Franklin Drilon made it by only one vote to the Senate presidency.

The battle lines were clearly drawn between the 13 administration senators belonging to the People Power Coalition (PPC) who voted for Drilon and the 11 others who voted for opposition-backed Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

Predictably, Malacañang was pleased with the election of President Macapagal-Arroyo's allies to the leadership of the two Houses

of Congress.

"This shows that we are now consolidated and so we have to work," President Macapagal said in a TV interview after delivering her first State of the Nation Address.

But the Senate itself is not quite consolidated.

"Watch out for the guns of August, Mr. President (referring to Drilon)," opposition Sen. Blas Ople warned during his nomination speech for Pimentel.

In their speeches, other opposition senators yesterday said they were dropping their "critical collaboration" posture and will go all out against the Macapagal administration.

"The big guns are now in place, raring to blast away at the excesses

DRILON/ A12

Cheers from business, jeers from Loi

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO
AND VOLT CONTRERAS

BUSINESSMEN and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) applauded President Macapagal-Arroyo's first State of the Nation Address (Sona) but poor farmers

and supporters of deposed President Joseph Estrada were unhappy with it.

Stock market analysts said the President's pro-business speech would give the market some relief today although they said payback time would come once the market

started to look for concrete results of her promises.

The Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FFCCII) said it was supporting the national agenda outlined by the President.

"If all sectors heed her call (to

set aside political bickering), then our country will succeed and move forward," said Donald G. Dec, president of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines.

While Ms Macapagal appealed for a one-year break in political

CHEERS/ A14

Step aside Mang Pandoy, enter Jason, Jomar, Erwin

BY ROCKY NAZARENO
AND VOLT CONTRERAS

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday gave a new face—three faces, in fact—to poverty, in a performance that lawmakers later variously described as a touch of show biz, the stuff of fairy tales and a rehash of the woeful "Mang Pandoy" saga.

Ms Macapagal presented Jason, Jomar and Erwin, boys who live in the infamous Payatas dump, to personalize her call for political unity, economic reforms and moral transformation during her first State of the Nation Address (Sona).

STEP/ A12

Megawati new Indon president; Wahid sacked



JAKARTA—Megawati Sukarnoputri was sworn in as Indonesian head of state on Monday minutes after the national assembly dismissed President Abdurrahman Wahid and elected her in a unanimous vote.

However, Wahid questioned the legitimacy of the vote and has vowed not to surrender the presidency even though he does not have the support of the armed forces or police.

Megawati, the daughter of Indonesia's founding leader Sukarno, is Indonesia's fifth president since it gained independence after

World War II. She is the overwhelmingly Muslim nation's first female leader.

"With all humbleness I accept the people's wishes," she said in an inaugural speech that contained no specific policy initiatives.

"I do understand that goodwill is not enough to resolve our problems," she said, adding that the nation needed "discipline and unity."

"I ask all sides to accept the democratic process, because this is the voice of the people," she said in apparent reference to

MEGAWATI/ A12

Striking similarities between GMA and Mega

MEGAWATI Sukarnoputri, the new Indonesian president, is averse to being compared with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The Philippines is the Philippines, Indonesia is Indonesia. Macapagal is Macapagal, and likewise Megawati is Megawati," she flatly declared in a statement last May.

True enough, the differences are many.

Megawati, unlike the ex-university economics

professor Ms Macapagal, attended two universities but did not graduate. Many doubt she has the intellectual heft to steer Indonesia out of its political and economic malaise.

Though both leaders each has three children, Megawati has been married three times while devout Catholic Ms Macapagal remains married to her husband of 33 years, lawyer Jose Miguel Arroyo.

STRIKING/ A12 MEGAWATI: Sweet revenge



She's popular, but can she rule Indonesia?

JAKARTA, Indonesia—She's popular, but can she rule Indonesia?

Megawati Sukarnoputri, who became Indonesia's fifth president yesterday after her one-time childhood friend Abdurrahman Wahid was ignominiously ousted by parliament, is seen as a popular but politically untested conservative.

Perceived by intellectuals as a lightweight, the 54-year-old daughter of Indonesia's founding president Sukarno has assumed her late father's mantle and is set to move back into the palace where she grew up.

SHE'S/ A12



Second FRONT PAGE

Recto is No. 12, Comelec rules

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA

THE NATIONAL Board of Canvassers last Friday declared Senators Ralph Recto and Gregorio Honasan the 12th and 13th place winners, respectively, in the last elections, but the Powers of Masa protested the ruling yesterday.

The PnM claimed the NBC's declaration was illegal because it was not approved by a majority of the seven-member Commission on Elections.

The resolution was approved by only three commissioners—Chair Alfredo Benipayo, Rex Borra and Florentino Tuson—with Borra penning the decision.

Two commissioners, Luzviminda Tancungco and Rufino Javier, dissented while two others, Mehol Sadain and Ralph Lantion, were absent.

The canvass report showed that Recto received 10,498,940 votes to

Honasan's 10,454,527, for a difference of only 44,413 votes.

The bigger difference, however, is that the 12th place winner will serve three more years in the Senate than the 13th place.

As such, Recto will serve a full six-year term, while Honasan will serve the remaining three years in the term of Teofisto Guingona who was appointed Vice President by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Lawyer Rufus Rodriguez, counsel for Sen. Loi Ejercito of the PnM, said yesterday the resolution was illegal and void as it was not approved by a majority of the commissioners, as required in the Comelec's rules of procedure and Article XI, Section 7, of the Constitution.

"The Comelec rules of procedure and the provision on Constitutional commissions are clear that any resolution or ruling should be made by a majority of the members and not merely by a majority of those

present," Rodriguez told reporters.

Section 5 of the Comelec rules on procedure states that "when sitting en banc, four members of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business. The concurrence of a majority of the members of the commission shall be necessary for the pronouncement of a decision, resolution, order or ruling."

The resolution approved by Benipayo and the two commissioners denied four petitions filed by Rodriguez contesting 150,000 votes for Recto in the provinces of Lanao del Norte, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, and another petition seeking the deduction of 30,000 votes from Recto's total in Zamboanga del Norte.

In dismissing the petitions, the resolution merely stated that the NBC had lost jurisdiction over the cases as it had already proclaimed the 13 winning senators.

Rodriguez said he would file a motion to recall the resolution. He said the 13 new senators cannot



RECTO

perform their functions until the Comelec issues a resolution approved by the majority, since the senators' proclamation was based on an illegal resolution.

Tancungco noted above her signature that she was dissenting as the resolution was "hurriedly done." She and Javier said they would issue their own separate dissenting opinion.

Party-list winners, losers hit poll body

BY ROCKY NAZARENO AND GERALD G. LACUARTA

THREE still unproclaimed party-list representatives yesterday lashed out at the Commission on Elections for "its slow pace in proclaiming the party-list candidates who garnered at least two percent of total votes cast."

Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales, who with two other party-list winners held a press conference at the House media office, said it was "ironic that winning party-list representatives who legitimately represent the marginalized and under-represented sectors of society... are now the ones marginalized."

Fifteen representatives from the party-list groups which won in the May 14 elections could not take their seats at yesterday's opening of the 12th Congress because of the Comelec's failure to comply with a Supreme Court requirement.

Failure of election

At the same time, a group of 45 losing party-list groups has asked the Comelec to immediately declare the May 14 party-list elections a failure because of alleged massive fraud and discrepancies in the canvass results.

The Coalition of Marginalized Party List Groups (CPAG) has also called for new party-list elections to coincide with the barangay elections on May 13, 2002.

The others who joined Rosales in the press briefing were Rep. Joy Young of Proundi and Louie Coran of APEC.

The Supreme Court had earlier stopped the Comelec from proclaiming the party-list winners because of disqualification complaints and directed the poll body to work with "extreme urgency" to submit a report on the qualifications of the 162 party-list groups for the high court to lift the suspension.

Rosales said Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo had assured them that the Comelec would be able to submit a partial list of the first 20 top party-list contenders tomorrow.

"At the earliest, we can probably expect a proclamation on the 30th of July," she said.

Some three to five million Filipinos are not amply represented with the continued non-proclamation of party-list winners, Rosales said.

Conscience bloc

"From the party-list caucus, we hope to build a conscience bloc within the House that can include individuals cutting across party lines," she said.

Gerardo del Mundo, counsel for the Bagong Bayani OFW Party and head of the CPAG legal team, said the discrepancy between the total number of votes received by the 162 party-list groups and the actual number of voters was "simply preposterous."

Del Mundo cited the Comelec's own Party List Canvass Report, dated June 19, which showed that voters who actually voted in the party-list elections only totaled 11.2 million but party-list groups got a combined total of 14.1 million, or a difference of 2.9 million votes.

Del Mundo last Friday submitted to the Comelec documentation on alleged massive electoral fraud and widespread irregularities, wholesale manipulation of tampered, falsified and manufactured election returns and certificates of canvass, and large-scale *dagdag-bawas* (vote shaving and padding) to support the CPAG petition.

"If these wanton shameless overpadding of party-list votes in favor of political parties, religious command votes, big business chambers and left-leaning groups, how then can we validly say that the party-list elections last May 14 truly reflect the sentiments of our basic sectors?" said Vic del Fierro, CPAG chair and head of the 349 Coalition.

The Comelec is currently screening the 162 party-list groups, particularly the 10 winning groups, based on an eight-point guideline issued by the Supreme Court in connection with a disqualification case filed by Bayan Muna against 17 groups led by the Mamamayan Ayaw Sa Droga.

The Comelec has been given until July 29 to complete the review.

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DOH statistics showed that some 490,000 Filipinos are totally blind and about 700,000 can see with only one eye. The DOH also found out that cataracts cause most of the cases of preventable blindness.

"These conditions could have been prevented if visual health services are widely available," said Health Manuel Dayrit.

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RP bucks 'open skies' bid by US

THE PHILIPPINES will oppose a US proposal to allow unrestricted aviation access into each other's markets, a foreign affairs official said yesterday.

US charge d'affaires Michael Malinowski had written a letter to Manila informing it that a US team was to arrive here to discuss an open skies policy with local aviation officials.

"The purpose of the visit would be to discuss both bilateral and multilateral options for establishing an open skies relationship between our two countries, and to answer any questions that Philippine authorities may have about open skies," Malinowski had said in his letter to the transportation department.

The proposal would remove restrictions on routes, capacities, flight frequencies and fare pricing, department officials said.

But such an arrangement "will spell the death of our airlines," said the foreign office official who did not want to be named.

"They will gobble up our airlines," the official said. "We cannot agree at this point to grant them open skies." AFP

MIKE'S WOES

'A misunderstanding'

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

A MISUNDERSTANDING between friends was how the President's husband described his public feud with a former Palace secretary.

Mike Arroyo and Veronica "Bing" Rodrigo had traded accusations that the other had accepted bribes to help get a vetoed telecommunications franchise bill recalled.

"I don't know anything about that. This is apparently a misunderstanding between friends. I must have been misunderstood by (Rodrigo)," Arroyo said in a dzBB interview as he dismissed the allegations.

Rodrigo, who recently resigned as President Macapagal-Arroyo's correspondence secretary, alleged that Arroyo and his friends had, for a P50 million bribe, attempted to have the vetoed bill recalled.

The bill would have granted a franchise to a firm believed to be owned by Jaime Dichaves, a crony of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada.

Rodrigo struck back at Arroyo after she felt alud to when Arroyo claimed in his radio program that a Palace secretary had been bribed to have the vetoed bill recalled.

But days after the public feud, the allegations remain unsubstantiated.

Arroyo has announced plans to go on holiday in the United States amid reports that the Senate would conduct a probe of the case.

Yesterday, Arroyo said his going abroad at this time was not an attempt to evade the Senate investigation.

"I'm willing to (testify in the Senate) so that the truth will be known..." he said.

Arroyo explained that he was supposed to have left two weeks ago but decided to delay his departure so he could attend the opening of Congress yesterday and watch the premiere of his son's film last night.

Arroyo said that he would be leaving for the US today.

The President's husband continues to believe that the charges against him could still be part of an alleged "destabilization plot."

No unity
for Marcos claimants

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government is in for a tough task of uniting the Marcos victims as a faction of the claimants yesterday refused to cooperate with the other camp in lobbying for their indemnification.

Lawyer Rod Domingo Jr. said he "would never meet" with representatives of the Samahan ng mga Ex-detainees Laban sa Detensyon al para sa Amnistiya (Selda) even to draft a bill that could end their long pursuit of compensation from the Marcoses.

Domingo also hit the Macapagal administration for its inactive interest in the plight of the 9,539 human rights abuse victims, saying Malacañang still has not made its position on the compensation of the claimants.

"In a way, Estrada was better because at least, he was sincere," Domingo said in a phone interview yesterday. "He approved the use of the \$150 million, but what about this government?"

"What is the position of this Macapagal government? Is it in favor of compensating the victims?" he asked, adding if the claimants still do not get their compensation under the present administration, it would be very difficult for them to get anything else in the future.

Domingo and Robert Swift, the claimants' lawyers, along with elected Akbayan Rep. Etta Rosales, have met with President Macapagal and PCGG officials in Malacañang recently to push for the waiver of the government's claim on the \$35-million Arelma assets pending litigation in a Hawaii court.

The Selda, on the other hand, is seeking a third of the \$644-million escrow account in the Philippine National Bank for indemnification and would file a bill on the House of Representatives through Bayan Muna party list to effect the payment.

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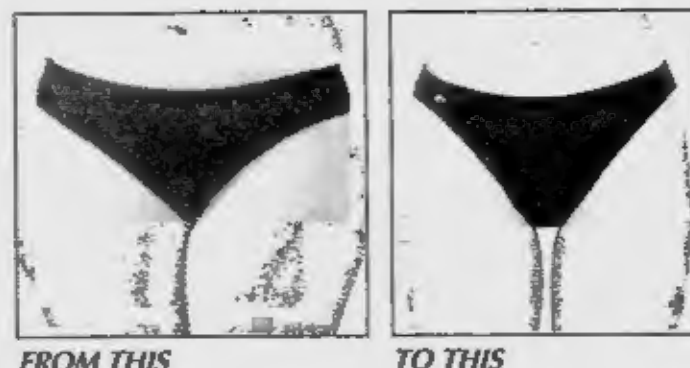
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MASTER'S PROGRAM

Name/Philippine Affiliation	Field of Study/U.S. Affiliation
1. Carmela Bahiyyah M. Arevalo Occidental Mindoro National College San Jose, Occidental Mindoro	Forestry State University of New York Syracuse, New York
2. Marjeliou R. Castillo Department of Agriculture Quezon City	Agricultural Economics Cornell University Ithaca, New York
3. Darlo A. Cidro Philippine Rice Research Institute Department of Agriculture Munoz, Nueva Ecija	Agricultural Extension Pennsylvania State University University Park, Pennsylvania
4. Ester B. Flores Philippine Carabao Center Department of Agriculture Munoz, Nueva Ecija	Animal Sciences University of Arkansas Fayetteville, Arkansas
5. Paisar L. Gadiawara Mindanao State University General Santos City	Agricultural Engineering Oklahoma State University Stillwater, Oklahoma
6. Liberty O. Inciong Int'l Training Center on Pig Husbandry Department of Agriculture Lipa City	Agricultural Extension Pennsylvania State University University Park, Pennsylvania
7. William F. Mugot Bureau of Plant Industry Department of Agriculture Cagayan de Oro City	Natural Resources Clemson University Clemson, South Carolina
8. Neil P. Parami Western Samar Agricultural Resources Development Program Department of Agriculture Calbayog, Samar	Agronomy Louisiana State University Baton Rouge, Louisiana
9. Jerry C. Serapion Philippine Council for Aquatic and Marine Research Development Los Baños, Laguna	Fisheries Auburn University Auburn, Alabama
10. Rommel C. Sulabo SunJin Philippines Corporation Norzagaray, Bulacan	Swine Production South Dakota State University Brookings, South Dakota
11. Arvin B. Vista Business Dev't & Marketing Department MADECOR Environmental Systems, Inc. Los Baños, Laguna	Natural Resource Economics Michigan State University East Lansing, Michigan

Ph.D. PROGRAM

Name/Philippine Affiliation	Field of Study/U.S. Affiliation
1. Rivaldo E. Aldes Philippine Rice Research Institute Department of Agriculture Munoz, Nueva Ecija	Agricultural Engineering University of California, Davis Davis, California
2. Eduardo A. Aranal, Jr. University of the Philippines Los Baños, Laguna	Natural Resource Management Indiana University Bloomington, Indiana
3. Von Mark V. Cruz International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA) Southeast Asia Center Los Baños, Laguna	Plant Genetics Iowa State University Ames, Iowa
4. Karen C. Dazo Bureau of Animal Industry Department of Agriculture Quezon City	Veterinary Epidemiology Mississippi State University Mississippi
5. Lina B. Flor Philippine Rice Research Institute Department of Agriculture Munoz, Nueva Ecija	Entomology University of Minnesota St. Paul, Minnesota
6. Josyline C. Javelosa Policy Analysis Service Department of Agriculture Quezon City	Agricultural Policy University of Florida Gainesville, Florida
7. Edgar Allen C. Po Xavier University Cagayan de Oro City	Agriculture & Natural Resources Michigan State University East Lansing, Michigan
8. Marissa V. Romero Philippine Rice Research Institute Department of Agriculture Munoz, Nueva Ecija	Food Science Rutgers University New Brunswick, New Jersey
9. Aletta T. Yriguez Marine Science Institute University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City	Marine Ecology University of Miami Miami, Florida

RESEARCH

Name/Philippine Affiliation	Field of Study/U.S. Affiliation
1. Mary Lynn S. Abiera Mindanao State University General Santos City	PhD Dissertation Research: Physiology of Crustaceans
2. Daniel L. Aquino Philippine Carabao Center Department of Agriculture Munoz, Nueva Ecija	Rumen Biotechnologies for Improving Ruminant Nutrition Cornell University Ithaca, New York
3. Liborio S. Cabanilla College of Public Affairs University of the Philippines Los Baños, Laguna	Modernization of Philippine Agriculture: Theory and Practice Purdue University West Lafayette, Indiana
4. Mansueto D. Cuaton College of Agriculture Mindanao State University General Santos City	Use of Baking Yeast as Growth and Yield Enhancer of Crops
5. Zenaida N. Ganga Benguet State University La Trinidad, Benguet	Application of Biotechnology to Potato & Vegetable Crops Breeding Cornell University Ithaca, New York
6. Hemani G. Golez National Mango Research and Development Center Department of Agriculture Jordan, Guimaras	Production of Biocon Agent for Mango Leafhopper Utah State University Logan, Utah
7. Alan B. Loreto Visayas State College of Agriculture Baybay, Leyte	Detecting Incidence of Weevil in Sweetpotato Roots by Optical Method Purdue University West Lafayette, Indiana
8. Daniel C. Paduano, Jr. Xavier University Cagayan de Oro City	Nutritive and Feeding Value of Rensoni in Livestock and Poultry
9. Jesse D. Ronquillo University of the Philippines in the Visayas	Development of Microalgae as Biocontrol Agents in Shellfish Hatchery University of Maryland

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Name/U.S. Affiliation	Philippine Affiliation
Robert L. Zimdahl Colorado State University	University of the Philippines-Los Baños Los Baños, Laguna

The Fulbright-Philippine Agriculture Scholarship Program

The Fulbright-Philippine Agriculture Scholarship Program (FPASP) was established on December 15, 1999 through a memorandum of agreement signed between the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Philippine-American Educational Foundation (PAEF), the Fulbright Commission in the Philippines that administers Fulbright exchanges between the Philippines and the United States. The program provides funding for educational exchanges between the Philippines and the United States. Funding for the FPASP comes from U.S. Public Law 480 Food for Peace Program.

The goal of this new initiative by the Philippine Department of Agriculture, the US Department of Agriculture and the Fulbright Commission in the Philippines is to contribute to the Philippine government's effort to modernize the agriculture and fisheries sectors of the country by developing their human resource base.

Under the program, awards are given to Filipinos to pursue graduate degree and non-degree study, research and consultations in the U.S. and to Americans to do lecturing, research, and consultations in the Philippines.

Those eligible to apply are Filipinos working at the Department of Agriculture and its affiliate agencies, faculty from accredited state and private colleges and universities offering programs in agriculture and fisheries, and professionals from non-government organizations, government financial institutions, and other government and private agencies whose main work are in agriculture and fisheries. FPASP grants are given to American academics, scientists and professionals from the agriculture and fisheries disciplines. Awards are made through open competition and are based on individual merit regardless of candidates' religion, gender, and political views.

Agencies cooperating with PAEF in the implementation of the FPASP are the Philippine Department of Agriculture and Agricultural Training Institute (ATI), the US Department of Agriculture, the US State Department, the Institute of International Education (IIE), and the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES). Inquiries about the program should be addressed to: The Philippine-American Educational Foundation, 10th Floor, Ayala Life-FGU Center-Makati, 6811 Ayala Avenue, Makati City 1226; telephone 812-0919 and 892-3744.

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Agenda for the nation

LIKE A TRUE economist, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo announced clear goals, set definite targets and cited precise figures in her first State of the Nation Address. She must be a journalist at heart because she followed one of the basic rules of news writing: "Be concrete, be concrete, be concrete." She made many concrete proposals and kept abstractions and rhetoric to a minimum.

EDITORIAL

She put across her message more clearly by citing what three boys from Payatas—Jason, Jomar and Erwin—asked for in a letter that they sent to her on a paper boat that they floated on the Pasig River. These are, she said, "Jobs, houses, education and food on every table." This certainly is a very concrete enumeration of what the people most need today.

While filled with a lot of specifics and concrete details, the Sona didn't lack philosophical underpinnings. The President's approach to the problem of poverty was premised on four basic guidelines: an economic philosophy appropriate to the 21st century, a modernized agricultural sector founded on social equity, a social bias toward the disadvantaged and the raising of moral standards of government and society.

We don't think any well-meaning citizen or member of Congress will have any quarrel with the priorities that the President set in her speech. Among them are the improvement of the economy, including the alleviation of poverty; the peace and order problem; the modernization of agriculture; the development of information and communications technology; and good governance, including a strong effort to curb graft and corruption.

But all of these things need the expenditure of billions of pesos in public funds. Where will the President find the money, given that the government is now operating on a P140-billion deficit, and tax collections are expected to be low because of the declining economy? Well, probably she has the answer in, among other things, a sentence she made toward the end of her speech: "We have to think Filipino, buy Filipino, invest Filipino."

The nation is now going through another season of gloom and doom. We cannot depend on other nations and other people to get ourselves out of the rut we're in. We have to pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps. We have to think of ourselves first, protect our businesses and industries, buy Filipino-made products and invest in Filipino enterprises.

And, as the President suggests, the taipans and other business people should start pump-priming the economy by investing once more in the country, reviving business and industry, creating jobs and increasing the buying power of people. More investments will mean more businesses and industries, more businesses and industries will mean more purchasing power for people and more economic activity will mean more taxes going to the government to be used in priority programs.

But hand in hand with this, the government will have to wage an honest-to-goodness campaign against graft and corruption. The campaign will have to focus, as the President said, on the two primary tax-collecting agencies of the government: the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs. In this connection, we hail the President's proposal to impose a gross income tax. This will do away with tax deductions which are a source of corruption in the BIR.

On the anti-corruption campaign, the President will have to set a concrete example by ordering the investigation of the charge that First Gentleman Mike Arroyo received a P50-million bribe to push for the recall of her veto of the telecommunications franchise bill. This question will have to be resolved before people can be made to heed her call for an end to corruption in government.

The concreteness and specificity of the President's address is one of its strong points; it is also one of its weaknesses. Because it contains numerous concrete proposals, it tends to have no focus. The many legislative proposals that it contains cannot possibly be all acted upon during the current session. The address looks more like an agenda for the entire three-year term of the 12th Congress. The President will have to draw up a priority list of about five to ten proposals that urgently need congressional action during the current session.

With the three Payatas boys by her side, the President ended her speech with an emotional appeal to the members of Congress to make sacrifices and unite for the welfare, development and security of the nation. The President said she was not "a miracle worker" and could not solve all the problems of the nation by herself. We hope that her appeal touched a responsive chord in the legislators' hearts and that they will help push the Macapagal agenda of providing jobs, houses, education and food for the nation.

It all started in a radio interview. But now the shocking story is all over town: First Gentleman Mike Arroyo took a bribe to have his wife reconsider a veto to a telecommunication bill.

Is it true? I hope not. But will Veronica "Bing" Rodrigo invent a false story involving the First Gentleman, the husband of her childhood friend?

Once upon a time, there were two girls who went to grade and high school together. Gloria and Bing were best friends, the daughters of President Diosdado Macapagal and Sen. Francisco "Soc" Rodrigo. When Gloria became President, she appointed Bing as her appointment secretary. But she did not last long in the snake pit. She resigned soon afterwards. Last Friday, she told the public why.

She said she could not stomach the corruption in the Palace anymore. She said she did not want to go public but she was being made the scapegoat for an aborted franchise bill establishing the Philippine Communications Clearing House Inc. Congress passed the franchise bill but President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo vetoed it. Mike Arroyo said Bing resigned because of it. An angry Bing went on the air to accuse Arroyo of accepting money to have the President reconsider the veto and approve the franchise. She did not mention any amount, but one newspaper reported that it was P50 million.

This is so far the most serious corruption charge against the Macapagal administration, which finished its first six months only last Friday. Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the blue ribbon committee would conduct an investigation and summon the First Gentleman—but that is only if Pimentel remains chair of the blue ribbon committee.

Text messages about the corruption charge against Arroyo are spreading like wildfire. It is interesting to note the similarities between Presidents Estrada and Macapagal. Erap thundered during his inauguration: "Walang kumapare, walang kaibigan, walang kamaganak..." Ms Macapagal said the same thing during her own

I READ a morbidly funny item last week. Philip Morris had just gotten into hot water for suggesting that smoking was good for the health of countries—or their economic health at least. This was so, it said, because smoking has been known to cause the early deaths of smokers. Consequently, it spared countries the need to provide for many of its citizens beyond a certain age, allowing it to make a killing (not its word) in social welfare savings. The savings could reach up to hundreds of millions of dollars.

The suggestion, a truly astounding one, naturally met with furious protest from various groups, notably those that have been fiercely critical of the sale of cigarettes, calling it legalized murder. One organization found it poetic irony that Philip Morris, which had just spent a fortune trying to sell itself as a responsible or newly enlightened company, would inadvertently show its true colors. The company's callous cynicism, it said, as shown by its bizarre economic theory, was entirely in keeping with its reason for being, which was to sell poison.

This is not unlike Jonathan Swift's famous satire, "A Modest Proposal." There, Swift suggested one surefire way by which Ireland might improve its economy overnight, which was by eating children. He wondered why economists hadn't thought of it before. Eating children, he said, almost immediately got rid of the excess population, excess as defined by homeless children who could not find work in Ireland's factories, and were compelled to beg in the streets. That spared the economy the need to provide for them. Additionally, children, however they are cooked, provided better nutritional value than their other counterparts in the animal kingdom.

Call the above callous cynicism or fierce satire, but they both say something rather profound about how completely confused we are, or have become, about means and ends. Philip Morris' suggestion may be astounding, but it is so only for being astoundingly honest, for being breathtakingly transparent. That is exactly how we think about the economy too. We do not think of it as a means to improve the plight of people. We think of people as a means to improve the plight of the economy. We are merely less honest about it, or about the methods we wish to employ, couching them in euphemisms or abstract terminologies. But that is really what we mean: How to use people to improve the

Should water rates be increased?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz



inauguration. But it turned out their friends and relatives did not believe them. And this was also how Chavit Singson's story on Erap's corruption started: through text message and interviews.

Maynilad Water Inc. has launched a triple-barreled advertising and propaganda campaign to justify its proposed water rate increase. The increase is a hefty 50 percent above the present rate but Maynilad has boiled it down to an increase of only one-half centavo per liter. It also has comparative prices of a liter of premium gasoline, diesel fuel and bottled water, which naturally are very much higher than its water. The comparison, I think, is already overacting. Why did it not go the whole hog and compare the price of one liter of its water to one liter of champagne or one liter of cognac?

As part of its overacting, Maynilad also has a list of comparative basic water rates in selected provincial water districts and in selected cities of the world such as Casablanca, Macau, Mexico City and Jakarta. Naturally, the provinces and foreign cities selected were those with higher water rates. Those with lower rates were not mentioned.

Maynilad also distributed copies of letters from "satisfied customers" such as Sr. Christine Tan who has no objections to a water rate increase. I am sure there were also letters opposing it but these were not distributed.

At a public hearing at the MWSS auditorium last Friday, there were also community leaders (solicited I am sure) who spoke in fa-

vor of the increase as well as those who spoke against it (definitely unsolicited).

What I am driving at is that all these over-acting gimmicks are too much already. The increase is necessary all right, but the over-acting is not. It cannot be denied that the value of the peso against the dollar has gone down drastically since the concession agreement was signed. The dollar-denominated loans of the government water agency (Maynilad assumed 90 percent of the debts while Manila Water assumed only 10 percent) therefore have increased in peso equivalent. From August 1997 to December 2000, Maynilad had to pay P2.7 billion more to service these debts, according to Maynilad president Rafael Alunan. He added that a \$400-million term loan did not materialize because of the Asian financial crisis. Maynilad, therefore, is strapped for cash and cannot implement its expansion program to service more communities.

So what do we do? Do we retain the old rates and be content with the water lack and continue buying from the water vendors? Or should we pay a little more to get more water from our faucets 24 hours a day? The choice is really up to the consumers. You want more water? Pay up.

Having said this, I would like to add that a 50 percent increase would be too much for the poor. Can't Maynilad recoup its foreign exchange losses in five to 10 years instead of only in one-and-a-half years?

Also, I noticed that water lost due to leaks and pilferage has increased since Maynilad took over. More than half of the water Maynilad gets from the MWSS is lost. From 1998 to 2000, its non-revenue lost water has risen from 372.46 million liters per day to 631.40 MLD. Where does the water agency get back the cost of this lost or stolen water? From paying customers. Why doesn't Maynilad reduce the water it loses daily so it doesn't have to charge its paying customers so much?

Modest proposals

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



economy. The economy is the end, people are the

That is clear in the way government—and the business community—treat the poor in this country. The argument against wage hikes (and for price increases, chief of them oil and power) is deeply steeped in it. That argument of course is that wage hikes subvert the economy, which today in particular is being buffeted by a global recession and various unforeseen adversities. We raise the wages of workers now and the profits of entrepreneurs will fall, which will be bad for the economy overall. The workers simply have to tighten their belts and wait until things get better.

When things are better, however—and they have been so at various times in the past—the argument continues to be against wage hikes. That is so presumably because we cannot afford to be such spend-thrifts after a spate of good fortune but must continue to scrimp and save to make the economy larger or to prepare for leaner times. The workers simply have to wait till the economy has grown so much bigger—and reached a "takeoff" point, for their turn to come. It goes without saying that the poor may not expect social welfare benefits at all. That is merely subsidizing them, which globalization reckons to be poor economics, which will only encourage them to be more mendicant and lazy.

The point when workers may finally get (real) wage hikes, or when the poor in general may get a break in life, never really comes. The Economy—the capital E indicating an alien and alienating distant presence—becomes an unreachable end, and humans a never-ending means. The image that leaps to mind is of human beings being thrown into a burning pit as an offering to a strange god.

I do not know, even from the completely cynical perspective of conspiring people for the economy and not the other way around, that it makes

sense to do this, to deprive people at this scale. Most countries think of their people as their single biggest resource. Though cynical itself in that it regards people as the means and not the end of economic development, it at least has the merit of thinking of people as a cog in the machine that needs to be oiled and kept running efficiently. Or, in literal terms, as a workforce that needs to be fed, educated and kept in reasonably high spirits the better for them to be more productive. Or less hostile to the system that grinds them like, well, ground meat, to go by Swift's modest proposal.

It most certainly does not make sense from a moral perspective. The one that says the economy exists to uplift people and not people to uplift the economy.

We are quick to accuse the poor of stupidity, or irrationality, of acting in ways that are contrary to self-interest, such as when they take to the streets in anger and profess undying love for a crook like Erap. But is it more logical and reasonable and enlightened to keep even the most productive of them, who are the workers, in a state of utter wretchedness and expect them to behave otherwise?

The Makati Business Club has lately expressed pessimism over the current administration, as well they should, noting how little it has done to restore everyone's confidence. I know that many of them were ardent supporters of Edsa II, and I've read their letters in the e-mail damning corruption and suggesting ways by which we may improve the country. But they may also wish to ask themselves what exactly they have done in that respect. What sacrifices have they taken during hard times to make sure the rest of their countrymen do not take the brunt of hardship while they themselves get away unscathed? What generosity have they shown during good times to make sure the rest of their countrymen get to partake of plenty even as they themselves reap the bulk of the harvest? Easy to see what government should do to improve the country. Easy to see what others should do to prevent the country from collapsing. Not so easy to see what one should do to accomplish those things.

You wonder in fact why the economists of this country do not just encourage smoking to improve this country's health. You wonder in fact why the businessmen of this country do not just suggest eating children to rid this country of poverty.

Joe de V would have been happy to be minority leader

I HAD never watched the election of a Speaker of the House of Representatives before, so yesterday's first session of the House which elected Pangasinan Rep. Joe de Venecia as Speaker proved most interesting. While the result of the speakership fight was a foregone conclusion unlike the election of the Senate president which was a cliff-hanger of sorts until Sen. Noli de Castro decided to vote for Franklin Drilon, still, because of the sheer size of the House, it was exciting.

Speaker De Venecia's 184-vote mandate as against LDP rival Carlos Padilla's 17 votes (and one abstention—Rep. Ronaldo Zamora's vote) was awesome. It was the largest majority vote for a Speaker in local legislative history. Moreover, in the parade of men who have held this post since the republic was formed, De Venecia was only the second House chief to be elected for three terms, thus ensuring him a niche in the chamber's annals. The only other Speaker to gain this distinction was Cornelio Villareal in the 1960s.

De Venecia bounced back to his old post with a vengeance. In 1992, he forged the "Rainbow Coalition" with seven political parties and some independents. In 2001 he formed the "Sunshine Coalition" with 14 political parties and one-third of the LDP that fought his candidacy. The LDP is now the minority party.

De Venecia's rebound reminds one of Richard Nixon, who was elected to the US presidency after he lost by hairline to John F. Kennedy. There was a time, about one and a half years after his defeat at the hands of Joseph Estrada in the 1998 presidential, when De Venecia's close friends and relatives were advising him not to run for the Senate so he wouldn't suffer the fate of his predecessor, Speaker Ramon Mitra, who lost in the Senate race after being clobbered by Fidel Ramos in the presidential elections. You'd be cheated in the Senate race, they told him. His friends and relatives urged him instead to run for the House in Pangasinan, so that hopefully, they said, he could go for the post of minority leader. Forget getting back the speakership, they advised him, Erap would never let you get it. De Venecia then made up his mind to get back his old seat, little realizing he'd land in the speakership again.

The talk everywhere it seems, in the government as well as in the private sector, is how to help alleviate the poverty of those of us who have been so marginalized. As I wrote this column yesterday, the newspapers were full of anticipation about what

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo would say about the problem of poverty-alleviation. In fact, her State of the Nation Address has been billed by the INQUIRER as the "Sona of the Poor." Last Sunday evening when I heard Mass at our neighborhood church, the priest in his homily was talking about how the wealthier Filipinos could help their poorer brethren as a Christian duty.

In the face of all this emphasis on the alleviation of poverty, Congress cannot ignore the national clamor for a lasting solution. Let's hope that under the leadership of two "returnees," Senate President Franklin Drilon and Speaker Jose de Venecia, the two chambers of Congress will put their minds together and address the poverty problem with more than just perfunctory zeal. We hope they will not be distracted by grandstanding and controversies. De Venecia yesterday said the government is raising the counterpart fund of \$2.5 billion mainly from natural gas earnings in order to be able to use the \$10.5 billion locked in overseas development funds (ODF).

Every Sunday evening at 9:15, I join Cecile Guidote-Alvarez in her program, "Radio Balintataw," over dZRH, where we invite civic leaders to talk about their projects for the lowest-income sectors of society. I had proposed this to Cecile as our way of contributing to the national effort to eradicate poverty. In the less than two months that we have been inviting civic leaders to talk of their programs, we have discovered so many wonderful projects for the poor. By highlighting these private-sector efforts, we hope other groups will be encouraged to do their share for the less fortunate.

One of the programs we highlighted in Radio Balintataw was the five-year technical-vocational training being conducted by the Erda Technical-Vocational High School in Pandacan for the poorest students in Metro Manila. Erda Tech administrator Wilhelmina Martinez explained how the poor students are able to get jobs and help their parents right after graduation.

Another project we featured was the dual-tech training in hotel and restaurant courses for young women

from poor families, being conducted by Punlaan School in San Juan, Metro Manila. We had for our guest Punlaan's cheerful director, Luz Filmer, who told us how technical training and character and values formation by Punlaan help young women raise the quality of their lives as they are guaranteed good jobs in leading hotels and restaurants.

Another guest, civic leader Angie Abella, told us of her group's livelihood projects for the poor in Payatas. Then there was the indefatigable Melon Recto-Silverio, who continues her livelihood-generating projects in the poorer sections of Makati.

Since President Macapagal was scheduled to deliver her Sona yesterday, we thought of inviting to the program Secretary Teresita Quintos-Deles of the National Anti-Poverty Commission to enlighten us on the administration's anti-poverty strategy. The NAPC is in charge of formulating it and coordinating government's efforts among the various agencies involved. Mukhang halimaw ag Macapagal officials ang hindi matakot sa inclement weather: Ging Deles came to the station despite the rains that poured all afternoon Sunday.

Perhaps it ought to be mentioned here, too, that two weeks earlier, my husband invited Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez and Government Corporate Counsel Amado Valdez to visit some PNOC properties that are the subjects of legal disputes in Bataan, and the two officials came for the conference despite bad weather and their tight schedules. I guess that's what happens when one serves a pro-active President.

Deles, in fact, told us that six of the Cabinet members were joining the multi-sectoral march to the Batasan yesterday afternoon, as the President wanted them to dialogue with the demonstrators, a lot of them Estrada sympathizers as well as left-wing elements, on their demands. This way, said Deles, they could not say that government officials were enjoying the comforts of the Batasan while the people were out in the streets. Aside from Deles, the Cabinet members who were in the streets yesterday were Dinky Soliman of social welfare, Manuel Dayrit of health, Patricia Sto. Tomas of labor, Hernani Braganza of agrarian reform and Mike Defensor of housing, as well as Benjamin Abalos of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority. Deles emphasized that it's also good for the Cabinet members to be among the crowd, so that they could help negotiate with the police.

More about the NAPC's vision for poverty alleviation in my next column.

Enough!

EARLY one morning (well, early for a bum like me), I was awakened by the irritating sound of a jeepney backing into our garage. I say "our" because I shared the garage with an Iranian and her family. I was renting one of two houses in the compound. Unfortunately, the garage we shared ran the whole length of my entire house. Next to the dusty garage was my neighbors' front lawn, and farther down was the house they lived in.

I opened my eyes and wrinkled my nose in disgust. I could smell the pungent odor of exhaust fumes permeating the living room. I had started sleeping on an old mattress in the living room ever since the beginning of summer, unable to stand the stuffiness in the bedroom. This was the annoyance I had to suffer once a week (aside from the daily dose of car fumes that accompanied my breakfast):

First, a jeepney backed into the garage really slowly because the dirt road was narrow. Then a driver and his companion got off and began to load sacks of rice from neighbor's bodega in awkward rheumatic movements. After 40 sacks had been loaded, the vehicle would squeeze out of the garage, making it only on the third try to the narrow road and around the corner to who knows where. The neighbors were into this rice business.

I flicked my blanket off of me in the fashion of a matador completely stressed out, and opened the front door. A few strong words "requesting" the driver to turn off the damn engine flew out my mouth like a mantra. I had told them to shut the old thing up twice before already. They seemed never to get it.

Apparently the starter was broken this time. So I asked how they started the damn engine in the first place. They said they hot-wired it. Couldn't you hot-wire it again? I asked. The guy turned around, got into the jeepney and positioned the monstrosity askant, with its exhaust pipe pointing toward the lawn as though it would make a lot of difference.

I begged them for mercy, explaining that my lungs were being poisoned slowly each time they came. He got the message and parked the sulfur-spewing demon on the road. I closed the door, satisfied but still a bit pissed off.

They finished loading the sacks after 30 minutes, including interruptions by tricycles and cars that needed to pass through.

Meanwhile my sleep had been completely disrupted. I watched TV and tried to keep my cool until the vehicle drove away.

Insulted

That night the Iranian woman who was my neighbor came over to share with me a piece of her mind: I should have pleaded for mercy with them and not her customers. My house used to be noisy at night when my friends came over, causing her Filipino maid sleepless nights. I couldn't have everything the way I wanted just because the garage was on my side of the compound.

She only stopped when her husband ordered her: "Come inside now and stop talking to those people!" And then he proceeded to tell me what he thought of me and my friends.

Great! I was too slow in processing what they were saying and lost my chance to defend my actions. The next thing I knew I was closing the door behind me, close to tears after being treated like a child and insulted several times.

The woman had told me I should move to a place where I wouldn't have any neighbors. But she should be the one to move out of the Philippines and go back to Iran where she and her parents came from. Maybe I was wrong, but so were they. But we never got to resolve the issue. Perhaps both of us were afraid of the damage it might bring emotionally and materially.

What's with neighbors anyway? What was it that I really wanted to say?

It dawned on me that this Iranian neighbor had a good job and a nice house and a nice car, and, come to think of it, an attitude. So did her parents who have been living in this country for who knows how long. Our government has been feeding expatriates, like my neighbor, for decades now. It has allowed them to work here even while our own citizens cannot get jobs simply because there were too many of them. These expats live in comfortable homes while Filipinos live under bridges and on railroad tracks, ready to be swept off their feet, not by love but by a Bicol-bound train. We have Indian businessmen peddling bed sheets and umbrellas on Isuzu motorbikes. We have American, African, Nepalese, Bhutanese and Pakistani students studying in our leading universities because it's cheaper here, while our own students quit high school to become janitors, maids (with foreign employers right here), and food servers, abandoning hope of earning college degrees. They come here to bribe our women and seduce our men with their exotic features.

Thinking about all this infuriated me. Due to the unfairness I experienced from this foreigner who lived next door, I came to think about the unfairness other Filipinos are forced to endure.

Citizens first

I have lived a few years in Abu Dhabi. Being an open country, a lot of foreigners live there. While there I learned that every citizen who had the skills, the intelligence or the education was assured of a high-paying job and a mansion and treated with respect. The government made sure to provide for its people first before providing for foreigners who came to work there, to vacation there or to find safety there. The citizens were the No. 1 priority and their well-being was always taken into consideration before the welfare of expatriates.

I learned to act with tact and to be polite there, making sure that I didn't offend any of the locals because I was a guest in their country. I knew that I didn't have the same rights as they had.

So what's the point of my story? It's really simple: As a guest in my country, my neighbors ought to behave. I don't have to take crap from a foreigner, including the exhaust fumes I have become accustomed to having for breakfast. There are times when I must put my foot down and say, "Wait a minute, I live here. This patch of earth is mine."

The experience taught me that I don't have to bow my head so low to the expats living off my country's resources whether they be black, yellow, or white. It reminded me that they should be the one who ought to bow down low and show us a little respect. I have every reason to assert my rights because I am Filipino, and they are not.

Katherine Rose A. Calingasan, 21, is a Communication Arts senior at the University of the Philippines, Los Baños.

Notice to Youngblood contributors

Contributors to Youngblood who haven't received their checks are requested to inquire with the PDI cashier on Friday.

THEY SAID

Wage policy

"This government, like its predecessor, maintains a policy that workers' wage and benefits must remain nailed to the basement floor so that it can attract foreign investors to the country."

—Sammy Mahumay, spokesperson of the Kilusang Mayo Uno

Powell unlikely to talk about My Lai

MY LAI, Vietnam—When US Secretary of State Colin Powell comes to Hanoi this week, survivors of the Vietnam War's most notorious massacre would like him to spare them at least a thought. It will be Powell's first trip to Vietnam since serving in that war in the 1960s and he will be the most senior US official to have fought the country ever to return.

During his visit to attend a regional security forum, US officials say the former general plans to take time out to pay tribute to seven Americans killed in Vietnam in April searching for remains of US servicemen still listed as missing from the conflict. But he has no plans to visit My Lai, a village near the coast of central Vietnam, where soldiers of the same 11th Brigade of the Americal Division Powell served with killed, according to Vietnam, 504 civilians, mostly women and children, on March 16, 1968. The US army later put the toll at more than 300.

The massacre at My Lai, the worst committed by US forces in Vietnam, occurred 10 weeks before Powell returned to Vietnam to start his second tour during which, as a major, he served as the Americal's operations officer.

In his autobiography "My American Journey" Powell says he did not learn of the massacre until the autumn of 1969. However, he has been accused of failing to properly investigate a December 1968 letter from an 11th Brigade soldier, Tom Glen, describing murder and torture of civilians by US troops, which Powell was ordered to check out.

According to the 1992 book "Four Hours in My Lai" by British journalists Michael Bilton and Kevin Sim, Powell concluded in a memo in response to Glen's letter:

"Although there may be isolated cases of mistreatment of civilians and POWs, this by no

NEWS ANALYSIS

David Brunnstrom

means reflects the general attitude throughout the division.

"In direct refutation of this portrayal (by Glen) is the fact that relations between American soldiers and Vietnamese people are excellent."

Survivors of the massacre interviewed in My Lai recently said they were outraged by that statement, which Powell makes no mention of in his memoirs.

"It's rubbish for him to say relations between local people here and American soldiers were good," said 63-year-old Pham Thi Thuan, who lost six members of her family, including her father, sisters and nephews. "I was very angry to hear that. They killed people here—we are the survivors. Many people were killed. They even killed cattle, and destroyed trees. How can he say relations were good?"

Another survivor, 76-year-old Ha Thuy Quy, whose mother and children were killed, said she did not blame all Americans, but thought Powell should take the opportunity to apologize on behalf of his country and make amends.

"He should apologize," she said. "They killed innocent people, they were guilty...they sent troops here to kill innocent people, they were very guilty. Bombs and bullets destroyed our place. We have no schools...The Americans could give us some assistance. People are still poor and hungry, the Americans need to help them."

Elephants go begging in Bangkok

BANGKOK—Late at night on a busy Bangkok street, a terrified female elephant roars in pain. Injured after being hit by a bus, the 22-year-old elephant hunches by the roadside. Her panicked handler, struggling to calm her, shouts for help.

"It's happened again," says veterinarian Alongkorn Mahannop, who rushes to the scene to look after the wounded animal.

Alongkorn, a veterinarian in Thailand's Royal Bureau, says road accidents are common for elephants brought into the city by their handlers in search of food and money. "This sort of thing is not a surprise. It happens all the time. I've seen many elephants hit by cars or with their legs stuck in big potholes here."

Alongkorn says that in June alone he treated 20 elephants in Bangkok for illness or injury. He says 15 elephants have been injured in road accidents so far this year, compared with around 20 last year.

Bangkok dwellers are no longer surprised to see elephants ambling through the streets with their handlers trying to sell passers-by bananas and vegetables to feed their charges with.

Experts say an estimated 2,500 wild elephants still roam the Thai jungles while another 2,000 are registered as tame or domesticated animals. Many are owned by impoverished handlers who, when times are hard, bring them into the capital, with its notorious pollution and traffic congestion. There the noble animals become beggars.

Their handlers make more money from those who believe elephants bring good luck. Some people pay mahouts to be allowed to walk under the elephants' belly three times, which is said to

FEATURE

Orathai Sriring

bring good fortune.

"It is so sad to see elephants begging for food," Alongkorn says.

The mahouts say they have no choice. "At home, we have no work, no money. If we don't come here, we will surely starve," explains 33-year-old Pong Malingam, who left his children behind in northeastern Surin province to come to Bangkok with his wife and his only asset, a bull elephant called Buanan. "At least, my elephant will have something to eat."

Pong says life in the Thai capital is not easy, especially for large animals trying to negotiate the busy streets. "We don't want to torture our animals doing this...they are not worth one or two baht each but over 300,000 (\$6,500). But we just have no choice," he adds.

Pong and other mahouts make a living in Bangkok by selling 20-baht bunches of bananas and vegetables to passers-by to feed the animals.

Pong has other moneyspinning hopes for his elephant, a young and strong bull: breeding. "I will breed elephants as we don't have many elephants left at the moment," he says. "My elephant can mate with about 40 or 50 cows a year, and more than half of these matings will be successful."

Pong says he will receive about 10,000 baht for allowing his bull to mate a cow, but only when a baby is born, which takes well over a year.

But many owners of tame elephants do not want their cows to breed since mothers cannot work while nursing. Most domesticated elephants are caught in the wild, rather than bred in captivity.

Mahouts say they earn about 200 to 400 baht a day by selling elephant foods, but much of this has to be spent paying off police. Officially, elephants are banned from the city.

In the heart of Bangkok, mahouts sleep in small tents, and work from early evening until after 2 a.m. when nightlife in the city begins to wind down.

"We all have a very harsh life here," one mahout says.

Elephants handlers say they want the government to help provide longer-term work for them. Soraida Salwala, secretary-general of Friends of the Asian Elephant, says serious measures need to be taken. "I've urged the government to take a serious pro-active action on this. They have been discussing about this for years but nothing has improved," she adds. "Mahouts don't want to go back home as they can make good money here. I don't believe they don't have any money if they can buy an elephant worth as much as 300,000 baht."

Although the city authorities banned elephants last year, they soon began to creep back into the city.

"Elephants did not really go out of Bangkok, but roamed in its outskirts, so we did not see many of them in town for a while," she says. Reuters

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Another monopoly in the making

THE NEWS breaking that Cosmos Bottling Corp. is up for grabs is very disappointing, to say the least. Here is a homegrown brand which has broken into the highly competitive softdrink industry and has, in fact, cornered around 30 percent of the market, and now it may end up as a success story gone awry.

Gaining control of Cosmos will effectively give Coca-Cola a virtual monopoly of the softdrink industry in the Philippines. While we have come to love Coke in the Philippines, the rise of Pop Cola and Sarsi as strong brands attests to the fact that we Filipinos also have it in us to come up with a product that can

hold its own against multinational giants like Coke.

If the reported buy-out of Cosmos happens, we Filipinos will be facing another monopoly. Coke will only love Coke. Eventually, they will kill Pop Cola and Sarsi because their only concern is to ensure that they have the Filipino softdrink market as a whole.

This will not be the first time it happens. Such a scenario has actually taken place in India where Coke took control of a very popular local brand, which was eventually phased out of the market.

Monopolies have already dictated to us what cars to buy, what



television programs to watch, what beer to drink, and even when and where to buy these things. Shouldn't we, at the very least preserve the right to choose what softdrink to drink?—MYLENE BILLEDO, Philand Drive, Tandang Sora, Quezon City

Tax exemption for homes

THE THOUSANDS of retirees who receive SSS and GSIS pensions as low as P2,000 a month should support Senate Bill No. 829 which seeks to exempt family homes from real estate tax authored by Senate President Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr.

Although no sensible senator or representative will oppose this bill, these retirees should still write all the senators and their respective congressional representative to remind them to fast-track its enactment.—T.B. ABAYAN, 13-A Banting St., North Fairview, Quezon City

Art by itself

EDUARDO A. Morato's article, "Use principles of art in management" is a work of art by itself. Being a corporate manager, I was quite taken by his gem of an article wherein he espouses the role of a manager as an artist.

The qualities and expectations of the real manager-artist are demanding indeed but he can always be guided by the true artist above. Thank you, Mr. Morato, for an incisive and scintillating piece.—MARILYN S.L. CAMACHO, Prudential Life Plans Inc., Baguio City

Clarifications on MRT issues

WE were able to follow closely the three-part special report of Clarissa S. Batino last July 16, 17 and 18 that dealt with guarantees related to the financing of major projects given by the Ramos administration. The MRT III was included in the mentioned projects that benefited from these guarantees.

Let me make some exceptions to some supposed findings made by the writer.

It was unfairly made to appear that the rail project was an original BOT project. Let me point out that from the start, even with the initial contract in 1991 between the Department of Transportation and Communications and the Levin group, the original proponent of the rail project, the scheme that was already adopted was the Build-Lease-Transfer (BLT) arrangement and this has been maintained until now. We are providing some relevant pages of the contract that support what is being asserted here.

There was even a statement in the report saying that the Commission on Audit was looking into the contract to determine if it was onerous. We are proud to state that the contract for the rail project can be considered as a document that had already passed scrutiny by all the branches of the government: executive, legislative and judiciary. It is noteworthy that the contract was reviewed by the DOTC, Neda, Office of the President, the Senate blue ribbon committee. It was even

brought to the Supreme Court and docketed as Tatad vs. Garcia (G.R. No. 114222). The findings or decisions of these offices never made any statement to support any allegation to the contract being onerous.

Batino also discussed access to the MRT III rail system. The DOTC and the Metro Rail Transit Corp. have already started the construction work for the installation of additional elevators and external escalators. These access equipment will complement existing structures being used in accessing into the rail system. This is in addition to the required facilities that have already been installed which are specifically intended for the use of persons with disabilities and the elderly.

It is admitted that a number of the stations of the MRT III are not located where they may be nearer to intersections in order that there shall be an effective intermodal transport integration. During the design stage of the project, the planners who were seeking the best location for the stations were restricted by technical constraints brought about by existing structures (infrastructure and buildings) near intersections and to insist on putting these stations where they may ideally be located will involve an enormous amount of right-of-way acquisition.—MARIO C. MIRANDA, project director, DOTC-MRT III project management office, MRT III Depot Building, Edsa corner North Avenue, Quezon City

Racism and crime

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan



THE MURDER of internationally renowned musician Tadao Hayashi was all we needed to further damage our international image. Details about Hayashi's murder remain sketchy but the crime should alert us to the increasing number of violent incidents directed against foreigners, or people perceived to be "foreign."

I refer here to a wide range of incidents, from the occasional "incidents" against tourists and visitors (including now, Hayashi) to the Abu Sayyaf's penchant for kidnapping Westerners. The trend is not limited to Filipinos at home. Overseas, we shouldn't forget too the less publicized case in New Jersey of two Filipino-Americans who beat to death a policeman, a Caucasian.

I've zeroed in on the violence directed against foreigners because it allows us to question one myth, that of Filipino hospitality. The fact is that our hospitality has always been selective. I've seen it all too often among Filipino plane stewards and stewardesses with the change in their facial expressions as they respond to requests: the ever smiling, ever gracious Asian responding to a Caucasian's request, changing dramatically to a scowl as the next passenger, a Filipino, makes a similar request. I've even seen stewardesses returning with the glass of water for the Caucasian and conveniently "forgetting" the one for the Filipino.

There was always a racist element to this selective hospitality. Even among "foreigners" that hospitality has been selective: the best treatment going to Caucasians (or people perceived to be Caucasian), with less hospitality exhibited as the skin color darkens. (An exception has been the Arabs, who despite their fair skin still gets discriminated against mainly because they are Muslim.)

This selective hospitality has been based on an opportunism, a perception of potential benefits from our "hospitality": a larger tip, a useful connection for the future. If in fact a friendship develops, expectations may grow about the foreigner helping out, and if the expectations are not met, the relationship sours, sometimes leading to violence.

I sense, too, that over the years,

there has been a growing cynicism toward foreigners in general, that they are all "mayaman" (rich) and are there to be used. It's a perverse sense of entitlement, sometimes fueled by distorted nationalism: these foreigners exploit us therefore we should use them as well.

A few years back, Caroline Hau, a Chinese-Filipino, delivered an incisive paper at a conference of the Association for Asian Studies where she looked at the kidnapping of Chinese-Filipinos, a group seen by many Filipinos as "foreigners." She gave the whole context of local ethnic Chinese being very visible in business dealings, with the perception that they are exploitative. The irony then was that the Chinese, seen as converting everything and everyone into commodities, now find their own bodies converted into commodities, i.e., their worth measured by the potential ransom money they can bring in.

A similar "logic" operates with the Abu Sayyaf, whose hostages are not just "foreigners" but represent all that is wrong in the world: white colonialism, Christianity. The motives for kidnapping expand so that it is no longer just an act of retaliation but a way of asserting one's "superiority" (hey look, we can take these *puti*, these "whites" any time, anywhere).

The potential for violence is often historically determined. The kidnappings of local Chinese (and now, Singaporeans) are extensions of a long and often bloody history of animosity against the Chinese in the Philippines, one that often makes it easier for kidnappers to just murder their victims after ransom is paid.

Resentment of the "puti" is more restrained, partly the result of a historical memory of their brutal superiority during colonial times. But note that when the resentment spills over, it can be brutal, as it happened in New Jersey. The murdered policeman was a neighbor of the Filipinos. The "puti" policeman came over to ask the Fili-

pinos, who were having a party, asking them to quiet down. This so enraged the two Filipinos—and I can imagine what they were thinking, "Who is this *tanggong puti* to tell us what to do?"—that they ganged up on him, literally beating him to death.

What to do about this situation? I have no short-term solutions but definitely, we need to get young people to be more introspective about our feelings toward "foreigners." There is a folk culture out there with its own racial categories and stereotyping. Some of these "races"—the *Intsik*, *Hapon*, *Kano*, *Arabo*—share a common perceived attribute of "mayaman." Moreover, the perception of wealth overlaps with a more specific attribute that "explains" that wealth: for the *Intsik*, *kapitalista*, for the *Hapon*, *Yakuza*, for the *Kano*, *imperialista*, for the *Arabo*, employer of overseas contract workers (plus "Muslim" thrown in for good measure).

Beneath all this is a sense of powerlessness, a resentment of the world: why must our nurses and midwives end up having to work as nannies for that Singaporean or Hong Kong *Intsik* or that *Arabo*, why must our women go off to Japan to work as "GROs"? It is a volatile situation, always in danger of being set off by the slightest provocation. Last year, I was with a seaman in Subic and a drunken American came by accusing him of being in the way. The seaman was furious and all ready to brawl. He controlled himself but muttered, "I take this all the time from the *puti* when we're overseas. I don't need to take this in my own home country."

No doubt, there's much more to all this than racial relations. I worry, for example, about the way our society is becoming more brutalized, about the way lives become devalued, faster than the peso, which makes it so much easier to kidnap, to kill, for a few more pesos. But for today, let's just think about our racism, and how our poverty and powerlessness fuel that racism, sometimes to the point of murder.

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.org

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The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR



FRENETIC ETNA

REUTERS

Mount Etna's crater erupts lava and rocks on the island of Sicily during the first hours of July 22. The mayor of Nicolosi town threatened by lava from Etna said he would announce to the world that his community had been abandoned unless higher authorities intervened with emergency help.

- **World clinches climate deal**
- **No breakthrough on missile defense—Putin**
- **Former Beatle Harrison expects to die soon**



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World clinches climate agreement

BONN, Germany—The world's environment ministers clinched a historic last-minute deal in Germany yesterday that should force industrial powers to cut emissions of the industrial greenhouse gases blamed for global warming.

An all-night marathon fight on deadline secured agreement in Bonn crucially from Japan, as well as Canada, Russia and others, for a compromise

agreement promoted by the European Union that should allow the 1997 Kyoto Protocol to come into force.

Amid groggy smiles and genuine relief, there was annoyance, however, that US President George W. Bush had already rejected any deal, saying the world's biggest polluter could not afford emissions cuts that would hurt its economy.

"It's a brilliant day for the environment," British Environment Minister Michael Meacher said.

"It's a huge leap to have achieved a result on this very com-

plex international negotiation. It's a huge relief."

Belgian Energy Minister Olivier Deleuze, who led the European Union's negotiating effort, criticized the United States for staying out of the deal but said the final compromise, which included substantial European concessions to Japan in particular, was better than nothing.

"It shows that George Bush is totally isolated in the climate debate," said Greenpeace climate activist Bill Hare.

"It is the long-awaited second step

in the implementation of the Kyoto protocol. We are calling on Japan to ratify it now."

Applause rang out in the room where ministers had bargained throughout the night as the deal was struck.

Ministers from 185 countries meeting at the United Nations-sponsored talks had feared that a second failure, following the collapse of a summit at The Hague in November, could have killed off the Kyoto accord.

That, environmental campaigners said, would have meant dangerous delay in slowing down the

greenhouse effect, in which polluting gases are believed to be trapping the sun's heat on Earth, melting polar ice, raising sea levels and creating more extremes of weather.

"We have finalized the rescue operation. We have rescued the Kyoto protocol. It is a major achievement because we live with this for many years to come," EU Environment Commissioner Margot Wallstrom said.

Some of the countries present might yet reject the plan at a plenary session. But what was vital was that the key industrial powers

had settled their differences.

"So long as we get success in the plenary in the next hour we have delivered probably the most comprehensive and difficult agreement in human history," an elated New Zealand delegation chief Peter Hodgson told reporters.

A spokesperson for Deleuze said Japan had secured a special exemption to overcome its hesitations about mechanisms for legally enforcing the protocol. Japan had demanded a softer approach on compliance mechanisms than the European Union. **Reuters**

Israel weighs CIA monitors for truce

JERUSALEM—Israel yesterday toyed with a formula to let the US Central Intelligence Agency oversee a truce with the Palestinians after Group of Eight leaders urged Israel to allow in monitors to prevent more bloodshed.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres suggested Israel might agree to CIA monitors to oversee a truce drawn up by the intelligence agency's Director George Tenet last month, along with an internationally backed framework for renewing peace talks.

The ceasefire has been derailed by almost daily bloodshed between the sides since it was forged on June 13 with the hope of ending 10 months of fighting in which more than 600 people have been killed.

At least 490 Palestinians, 128 Israelis and 13 Israeli Arabs have been killed since Palestinians erupted in revolt in September in the wake of stalled peace negotiations.

Israeli political sources said Israel had agreed to the deployment of as many as 10 CIA officers to monitor the ceasefire, but still opposed a Palestinian demand for the deployment of international observers or peacekeepers.

"We've never been against the CIA bringing a few more monitors for the purpose of its work. This started long before we talked about an international force or not," Peres told Channel One television on Sunday night.

The political sources said it was not clear if the United States would agree to allow the CIA to raise its already prominent role in the conflict.

Israeli security forces remained on high alert yesterday after a Palestinian bomber was arrested shortly before he was due to strap a device made up of half a dozen pipe bombs to his body and detonate it in the northern city of Haifa.

Alerted to a possible bombing in Haifa, police set up roadblocks around the city and found the man before he could carry out the attack. During questioning he lead them to the bomb which was hidden in an apartment building. **Reuters**



'PAPA' EVERYWHERE

Surrounded by past winners, Danny Woods (center) of Buckeye Lake, Ohio, cradles a bust of Ernest Hemingway July 21 after he bested 117 other contestants at the annual 'Papa' Hemingway Look-Alike Contest at Sloppy Joe's Bar in Key West, Florida.

G8 leaders say rioters eclipsed help for poor

GENOA, Italy—World leaders wrapped up a summit in the Italian port of Genoa complaining their achievements for the poor were drowned out by riots in which a demonstrator was shot dead.

The Group of Eight powers say violence has overshadowed their launch of a \$1.3-billion global fund to fight AIDS and a commitment to help lift Africa out of poverty.

"For the first time we have actually got a positive, definitive process and plan for dealing with the problems of Africa and yet you measure the amount of coverage for protests and Africa, it would have been a ratio of 10 to one in favor of the riots," British Prime Minister Tony Blair said.

"The world has gone mad when that is the case."

The leaders conceded their summits were oversized.

"It has become a very, very big thing. It is getting out of control," said Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien, who is to host next year's G8 summit from June 26-28 in the Rocky Mountain resort of Kananaskis in the Canadian province of Alberta.

G8 delegations, now numbering up to 900 people, would be slashed to a maximum 35 each, he said. "If you want to come, bring a sleeping bag."

But the leaders refused to abandon future summit meetings in the face of violence.

"I am sorry there were some people hurt but we have to meet," said a determined Chretien.

"We are discussing some very serious problems," he said at the end of the three-day meeting here, where streets littered with smashed glass are dotted with looted stores.

"If the anarchists want to destroy democracy, we will not let them succeed," Chretien added. **AFP**

Putin: No breakthrough on missile defense

MOSCOW—Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday said he failed to reach a breakthrough during his talks on missile defense with US counterpart George W. Bush, but still noted some progress in the meeting.

"Of course there was no major breakthrough," Interfax quoted Putin as saying.

"We (Russia) reaffirmed our support for the 1972 ABM (anti-ballistic missile) agreement. At the same time, there is movement forward," he added in reference to his Sunday meeting with Bush in Genoa, Italy.

Putin and Bush agreed to link negotiations over controversial US missile defense plans with an agreement over mutual bilateral nuclear

warhead reductions.

"We are interested in, and are able to make steady progress toward the elimination of offensive weapons," RIA Novosti quoted Putin as saying.

He added that "we think that it is right" to link negotiations over nuclear disarmament and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which in its current form bans Washington's mooted missile defense system.

Putin added that more negotiations were possible over the issue when he meets with Bush's national security advisor Condoleezza Rice on Thursday.

Such talks will "play a positive role in solving all difficult questions," said Putin.

On Wednesday, Rice is also due

to meet with Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov and Russian security council secretary Vladimir Rushailo.

Following the conclusion Sunday of a three-day G8 summit, Putin and Bush agreed to link Washington's plans to build a missile defense to a discussion of cutting both sides' nuclear arsenals.

"The offensive arms and issue of defensive arms will be discussed as a set," Putin told reporters Sunday.

"The two go hand-in-hand," said Bush, who wants Moscow to agree to scrap the 1972 ABM treaty and thus free Washington's hands to deploy a shield against attacks from so-called "rogue states" such as North Korea or Iran. **AFP**



US President George W. Bush (right) and Russian President Vladimir Putin stress a point before the start of a meeting between Russian and American delegations at the end of the G8 summit in Genoa July 22. **Reuters**

Cosa Nostra boss slips easily past probers

PALERMO, Sicily—Families in practically every corner of Sicily are willing to give Bernardo Provenzano a clean bed, a hot meal and lots of respect.

Then, long before the searing sun rises high over the island, the honored guest slips away. The fugitive's hosts don't exactly put a sign out front saying, "The boss of bosses slept here."

Sometimes, investigators add, the families can only guess at the identity

of a man they are asked to shelter as a sign of their loyalty to Cosa Nostra.

On the run since 1963, the reputed head of Sicily's Mafia continues to frustrate investigators, thanks largely, they say, to his ability to choose his contacts well and his willingness to constantly change hiding places, even at the expense of not seeing his wife and two sons for almost a decade now.

No one on the side of the law even knows what the 68-year-old

Provenzano looks like these days. Plastic surgery, a pair of glasses or maybe a beard could have drastically changed the police's computer-generated image of him. It shows a man with a broad nose, high forehead and small, intense eyes.

The only photo police have dates from when he was a young man in Corleone.

"Theoretically, if I met him and he asked me directions, I certainly wouldn't know how to recognize

him," Palermo's chief prosecutor, Piero Grasso, says in a new book, "The Invisible Mafia."

While virtually all of his fellow mob chieftains have been captured during Italy's stepped-up war against the Mafia over the last decade, Provenzano is believed to be quietly going about his business, which includes transforming Cosa Nostra to make it much harder to fight.

"I'd say that the Mafia has never before felt so strong as in this mo-

ment," Grasso says in his book.

That's a bitter admission for anti-Mafia fighters who scored several stunning successes in the 1990s, for example arresting mob kingpin Salvatore "Totò" Riina after 23 years as a fugitive.

Riina, then reputed to be the "boss of bosses," was captured in Palermo a few months after car bombs killed the state's two top Mafia investigators, prosecutors Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino. **AP**

Burundi foils coup attempt, minister says

BUJUMBURA—Burundi authorities put down an attempted coup d'etat overnight, the defense minister announced yesterday on national radio.

A military source said at least two soldiers were killed during the coup attempt and the capital's military commander, Lieut. Col. Fabien Ndagijimana, wounded.

Loyalist forces were restoring order, Defense Minister General Cyrille Ndayirukiye said. Gunshots and grenade explosions were heard in several areas of the capital through the night.

The announcement came as African heads of state prepared to meet in Arusha, Tanzania, to set the seal on an 18-month transitional presidency for Pierre Buyoya under Burundi's peace plan.

Buyoya, a Tutsi, is to hand over to a Hutu president for the second 18 months of the transition period, although several signatories to the peace plan now oppose Buyoya's staying on in power in Burundi, where civil war has killed more than 200,000 people, mostly civilians, since 1983. **AFP**



GEORGE SAYS HE'S NEAR DEATH

Former Beatle George Harrison, shown in this May 6, 1998 file photo arriving at London's High Court, admitted July 22 that he expected to die soon from cancer, the group's former producer George Martin was quoted on Sunday as saying. The 58-year-old musician has been treated for a brain tumor at a clinic in Switzerland, having already undergone an operation for lung cancer earlier this year.

Asean told: Carry out reforms or lose

SINGAPORE—Members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations risk losing competitiveness and investor confidence if they don't carry through painful structural reforms, Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said in Singapore yesterday.

These reforms have taken on a greater sense of urgency especially after the 1997-98 Asian crisis and China's pending entry into the World Trade Organization, Downer said while on a stopover en route to Hanoi where he will be attending the Asean Regional Forum.

Otherwise, it would be difficult for the 10-member regional grouping to become an effective bloc capable of building economic prosperity for the region's 500 million people in the era of globalization, Downer said.

"Commitment to structural re-

forms must be translated into action, no matter how painful that may be," he said.

"Those who implement reforms are restoring not only their competitiveness, but international confidence."

"In so doing, they boost the ability of Asean as a whole to compete successfully for capital inflows."

Asean's image as an economically vibrant group was thrown into doubt in the aftermath of the 1997-98 crisis while that of China has risen substantially, Downer said.

Already, China was drawing a lot of foreign investments that used to head Asean's way, he said.

"The trouble with Asean is that it doesn't have a sufficient reputation for being economically progressive at the moment, yet it had the history of being economically progressive," Downer said. **AFP**

Aussie wakes up in bed with crocodile

BRISBANE, Australia—An Australian camping by a river in far north Queensland awoke to discover he was sharing his bed with a large crocodile, officials here said yesterday.

The croc, which was lying across his chest, then tried to drag the 36-year-old man into the water. But he escaped with the help of a friend.

The man, who had been camping by the North Kennedy River, was recovering in Cairns Base Hospital yesterday after being treated for nothing more than bites to his right wrist.

The incident happened on Saturday morning at Hanns Crossing in the Lakefield National Park, north-west of Cooktown on Cape York Peninsula.

"Two men were sleeping at their campsite about 15 meters from the water's edge at Hanns Crossing on Saturday morning when one was awoken by something heavy across his chest," Environment Minister Dean Wells said.

"The man yelled to his friend and the crocodile seized his wrist and tried to drag him toward the water. Fortunately, the crocodile let the man go and they were able to get clear of the animal." **AFP**

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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon will have rains and gusty winds and the coastal waters of these areas will be moderate to rough. The Western section of Luzon will have rains while the rest of the country will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	HI 30° Lo 23°
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	HI 26° Lo 14°
Tuguegarao	Rains	HI 28° Lo 21°
Laoag	Rains	HI 28° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 22°
Taytay	Cloudy with Rains	HI 28° Lo 21°
Laguna	Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 26°
Calapan	Rains	HI 31° Lo 24°
Butuan	Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 24°
Marikina	Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 25°
Cebu	Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 25°
Boracay	Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 23°
Zamboanga	Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 23°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 21°
Butas	Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 23°

Compiled by Ray Lopez, PDI Research/7/24/01

ROUNDUP

2 killed in mishap

ILAOAN, Isabela—Two persons were killed and two others were hurt Thursday when a trailer truck rammed a van along the national highway in Reina Mercedes town, police said. Killed were Cpl. Benedicto de la Cruz, a member of the 5th Infantry Division's military police and Marcelina Fabro of Gamu town. The truck driver, Amador Racquel, surrendered to go to jail in Cauayan City. **Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**

PMA gets fish breeders

BAGUIO CITY—As part of the income and livelihood program of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in Cordillera gave 15 aquarium sets and ornamental fish breeders to representatives of the Philippine Military Academy. This came after a three-day seminar on fish breeding at the National Integrated Fisheries Technology Development Center in Dagupan City. **PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**

Farmer, soldier charged

SAN AGUSTIN, Isabela—A farmer was charged with homicide for killing his brother after a quarrel. Police said Riche Briones shot and killed his older brother Leonardo during a drinking spree in their house last week in Roxas town, a soldier was also charged with homicide after shooting to death a fellow soldier over an argument. Sgt. Hector Baguna of Gattaran town killed Cpl. Wilson Leal of Luna, Apayao, while they were riding in a bus on their way to their camp. **Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**

Agui foundation launched

TUGUEGARAO CITY—A foundation in honor of slain Cagayan Rep. Rodolfo Aguinado was launched at the St. Peter's Cathedral here Saturday. Gov. Edgar Lora and Dolia Carmen Carag led about 1,000 residents here in launching the Aguinado Foundation Inc. The foundation would finance scholarships for poor students, livelihood projects, cooperatives and loans for tricycles for poor unemployed residents. New People's Army assassins killed Aguinado near his house here on June 12. **Estanislao Calder, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**

Vizcaya in calamity state

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—The provincial board of Nueva Vizcaya on July 16 declared the province under a state of calamity after losses due to Typhoon "Fena" reached P98.6 million. A report released by the provincial disaster management council said Fena's strong winds and rains destroyed P56-million worth of roads and bridges, P24.9-million worth of irrigation canals and P17.7-million worth of livestock and farm products. With the province under a state of calamity, the release of funds for typhoon victims and rehabilitation of damaged infrastructures would be hastened. **Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**

Ghost employees probed

SANTIAGO CITY—The city government is looking into reports that ghost employees were hired during the one-and-a-half year term of former Mayor Amelia Navarro. Antonio Santos, city human resource management officer, said his office is retrieving papers that could show the alleged employment of ghost employees since Navarro assumed the mayoral post in 1999. Navarro said there were no ghost employees during her administration. She described these reports as a ploy to discredit her administration. **Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**

Blasts hit 2 buses

DAVAO CITY—Two simultaneous explosions rocked two buses of the Yellow Bus Line Company in the firm's compound along Ma-a Road here Friday at dawn. No one was reported hurt. Police said terrorists were not behind the attack. Police said those who planted the bombs could be disgruntled workers of the bus firm. The bombs were made of dynamites. Two parked buses were damaged. **Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau**

Job plan proposed

FORMER senator Ernesto F. Herrera recently urged President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to call for an inventory of idle government lands and suggested that these be leased to qualified people's organizations and cooperatives so the lands could become agriculturally productive. "The time calls for creative measures to boost economic activity in the country, and thus means all available public assets must be used to keep the economy afloat," said Herrera who used to chair the Senate committee on labor and employment. Herrera's suggestion is just one of a package of "fast-track" measures which he proposed in a letter to the President. The other proposals include a joint effort by the Department of Labor and Employment and the Department of Foreign Affairs to look for expanding foreign labor markets for OFWs and a community employment program that would be tied up to the government's budget for infrastructure building. "These 'fast-track' measures are intended to create emergency jobs, give people some hope during this investment drought, even as we try to institute those 'deep' reforms that are really needed by the economy in recovery," Herrera said in a statement.

Gunmen seize 11-year-old son of trader in Cebu City

BY JHUNNEX NAPALLACAN
AND KATHY L. NAVARRO
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Two motorcycle-riding men abducted an 11-year-old son of a Filipino-Chinese businessman here while the child was on his way to school yesterday morning. Ryan James Yu, a Grade 5 pupil of St. Francis de Assisi, was walking with the family helper along Friendship Street in Peace Valley when he was snatched by two armed suspects about 7 a.m.

Based on police investigation, the abduction happened 100 meters from Ryan James' house in Green Valley Subdivision at the Capitol Site and about 50 meters from his school in Peace Valley, Barangay Lahug.

Reports said the suspects pistol-whipped the boy and then brought him to Barangay Sudlon where a white Kia Pride car was waiting.

The suspects, with the boy, boarded the car and sped off toward the north.

This was the first major kidnapping incident in Cebu City in three years. The last was in October 1998 when a kidnapping syndicate abducted Reagan King, whose family owns a heavy equipment company. He was rescued by the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force but after the family had paid ransom.

Senior Supt. Hiram Binatiro, Cebu City police chief, said police have yet to establish if yesterday's abduction was a kidnap-for-ransom case.

He said police were looking into other possible angles such as vendetta by the enemies of the Yu family and a reported conflict between the Yu couple.

"The mother is cooperating (with the police) but (she) is withholding some important information," Binatiro told a press conference yesterday.

Ryan James is the only son of the Filipino-Chinese businessman Ronnie and his wife, Zenia. The couple has a lending business and is into real estate.

John Vero, the Yu family lawyer, said the suspects had called the victim's parents in their house in Green Valley, just a few hours after the kidnapping.

But he said the suspects did not demand any ransom but merely asked why there were many people in the family residence.

Vero denied reports that the kidnapping was linked to Ronnie's alleged demand for custody of Ryan James after the couple had reportedly separated.

He said the Yu couple had not broken up. It appeared that the couple separated because they own several houses and pieces of property because of the family's real estate business, he added.

Binatiro said that on June 24, two men on board a white car beat up Ronnie just outside his house in Horseshoe Drive in Barangay Banawa.

Nothing was taken from Ronnie who did not report the attack to the police, he added. Binatiro said they were looking into a possible link between the June 24 attack on Ronnie and the kidnapping of Ronnie's son yesterday.

Vero, however, said about P120,000 was taken from Ronnie during the June 24 attack. His client chose not to report the robbery to the police out of fear that the suspects might get back at him.

Police reports said the boy and the helper, Joel Concepcion, were walking toward the school when they were waylaid by the suspects.

The motorcycle driver, who was wearing a helmet, pointed a gun at Concepcion while his companion, with dark sunglasses, was forcing the boy to board the motorcycle.

When the boy resisted, the suspect pistol-whipped Ryan James in the head.

The motorcycle then fled to Barangay Sudlon where a white Kia Pride was waiting.

A witness said the boy was unconscious when he was loaded into the car. At first he thought that Ryan James was a victim of a vehicular accident because the boy's head was soaked in blood, the witness said.

3 dead as dengue sweeps Laguna

SAN PABLO CITY—The number of dengue victims in Laguna province since January has reached 139, including three persons who have died of the disease, the Department of Health Provincial Dengue Coordinator's Office here disclosed.

Evelyn Ramos of the DOH also cited San Pablo City as having the highest number of victims in the province.

Dr. Dina Mendoza, San Pablo City dengue control coordinator, has listed a total of 103 dengue victims in the area during the six-month period.

Nimrod Villanueva, a rural health physician in Region IV, advised households to take precautionary measures by taking a round-the-clock habit of cleaning their surroundings and destroying breeding areas to avoid the dreaded disease.

Nationwide, the DOH reported 4,189 victims of dengue, with 38 persons dead from January to June this year. DOH Secretary Manuel Dayrit said these figures are higher compared to that of last year.

"The present figures are expected to rise since the disease usually thrives during rainy days," Dayrit said.

Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

19 jailed for protesting poll results

BY CYNTHIA A. BORQUETA
PDI Visayas Bureau

CATBALOGAN, Samar—A mayoral candidate and 18 members of the partylist group Bayan Muna are languishing in the provincial jail after a town mayor charged them with sedition for putting up a barricade in front of the municipal hall on May 16.

The 19 gave themselves up to police on July 11 after receiving a copy of warrants for their arrest issued by Judge Ofelia Lloza of the

Hinabangan-Calbaga Municipal Circuit Court. Police first detained them at the Hinabangan police station but moved them to the Calabanga provincial jail on July 20.

Police expressed fears that the companions of the 19 detainees might rescue them from the police station.

The 19 were among the 47 persons charged with sedition by Hinabangan Mayor Victor Tinay for putting up a barricade on May 16, preventing municipal officials from entering the town hall.

They are Jaime Lobres, Tinay's rival in the mayoral race, and Bayan Muna members

Shirley Bohol, Sixto Elizan, Victor Mabonga, Domingo Absyree, Felix Quimenes, Rodrigo Nabilo, Antonio Bacayon, Guillermo Padernal, Quinna Obor, Gregorio Navidad, Prudencio Adobo, Jesus Abagar, Juan Abarracoso, Edgardo Moral, Alfredo Cumpio, Juan Abadiano, Rolando Gadin Jr. and Domingo Bacayon.

They barricaded the municipal hall to protest Tinay's victory in the May 14 elections, claiming that Tinay cheated.

Bohol told the INQUIRER that they decided to surrender "because we just want to air our sentiments."

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BASF provides training programs as well as production-related technical symposiums to benefit our employees. These programs are conducted locally and regionally in the form of seminars for staff at various levels. Examples include basic, advanced or specialized courses in Management, Financial Accounting, Marketing, Sales, Logistics and Work Safety Procedures.

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In the Philippines, BASF strongly believes in its people and has invested heavily in the training of the local manpower. We encourage teamwork and cooperation, as well as partnership and collaboration. This commitment is further reflected in our efforts in localizing management and transferring more than a century of knowledge and expertise to local hands. In BASF Philippines alone, more than 75% of the executive positions are already being held by Filipinos.

Training and development remains an integral part of BASF's corporate policy. This spells a brighter future for BASF employees in the Philippines, as they gain exposure to world-class quality working standards.

For more information, kindly contact
Mr. Lorelie Oliso of Corporate Communications
Department at (043) 849-0001



Training staff to prepare them for bigger responsibilities.

Megawati new Indon president; Wahid sacked

(From page A1)

Wahid's stated position that he would not accept the legacy of the vote that swept him from office.

The new president is adored by millions of poor and middle-class Indonesians. Although she had served as Wahid's deputy since 1999, she remains largely untested as a leader.

Apart from identifying herself with her father's nationalism, she has never outlined a strategy to pull Indonesia out of its deep economic crisis. Nor has she said how she would resolve the many ethnic, religious and separatist conflicts that threaten the unity of the world's fourth-most populous country.

Megawati later read a prepared speech to reporters ordering the current Cabinet to assume a caretaker role until a new government is named "in a few days." As usual, she refused to answer questions.

With Wahid determined to stay on and Megawati installed as the new President, Indonesia faced the prospect of two individuals claiming to be the rightful head of state.

Megawati 54, will govern until parliamentary elections are held in 2004.

591-0

The motion to dismiss Wahid and replace him with Megawati was passed

591-0. More than 100 pro-Wahid deputies boycotted the proceedings.

Lawmakers erupted into cheers and applause when the result was announced. Megawati's husband, Taufik Kiemas, an assembly member, broke into tears.

The vote was taken after army generals and senior police officers rejected an emergency decree issued hours before by Wahid. He had ordered the immediate suspension of the assembly, Indonesia's supreme legislative body.

Unlike Wahid, Megawati enjoys close links with the military, which supported her rise to power.

The same assembly elected Wahid, a nearly blind Muslim cleric, in October 1999 as the first democratically chosen leader of Indonesia after the 32-year dictatorship of former President Suharto.

He was impeached for misuse, constitutional and alleged involvement in two corruption scandals, although prosecutors and police had cleared him of wrongdoing.

"Abdurrahman Wahid is dismissed as President before his term ends as he truly violated state guidelines," Amien Rais, the assembly's chair said. "The Vice President, Megawati Sukarnoputri, is appointed President of the Republic of Indonesia."

Wahid, who boycotted the impeach-

RP hails peaceful leadership succession in Jakarta

THE Philippines yesterday hailed the apparently peaceful transition of power in neighboring giant Indonesia and wished new President Megawati Sukarnoputri the best of luck in restoring normalcy.

"The good news is, it's taking place peacefully," foreign affairs spokesperson Victoriano Lecaros said of the transition.

Asked if the dismissal of

President Abdurrahman Wahid and his replacement by Megawati would lead to stability in the world's fourth most populous nation, Lecaros said: "We certainly hope so."

The Philippine consul in Jakarta reported to Manila that there was "no disorder in the streets" and the country was calm, Lecaros told reporters.

"That's a country we have close relations with, officially or other-

wise," he added.

But Lecaros stressed that problems in Jakarta were "for the Indonesians to sort out for themselves," Lecaros said, repeating a mantra of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Lecaros said Manila hoped the new government would continue to support the Philippine government's efforts to negotiate a politi-

cal settlement with Moro separatist rebels in the country's Muslim south.

Wahid had offered to host the talks, which resume in Malaysia on Tuesday.

"We hope that that would still be on the table. But I guess they have bigger problems to attend to right now," Lecaros said. "The new President has to organize a new cabinet." **AFP**

Step aside Mang Pandoy, enter Jason, Jonas, Erwin

(From page A1)

Afterward, the reedy voices of the three children were hardly audible as a horde of journalists overwhelmed them with questions outside the Batasang Pambansa session hall.

"I want to be an accountant," declared the smallest of the three, Erwin Dulera, who at nine years of age looked more like a 5-year-old.

Jason Van Baneyan, 10, the second best student in his Grade 4 class, said he wanted to be an architect "and build houses for the poor."

Jonas Pabalan, the shiest among the three, could only mutter "I just want to finish school."

It was to these children that Ms Macapagal addressed her promises of more jobs, better educational opportunities, more houses and more food.

"Your dreams are also our dreams. I will do everything just to make those dreams come true," Ms Macapagal assured the three boys, a pledge that was met with thunderous applause in the jam-packed session hall.

The President began her Sona with the story of how the children had sent letters, folded into boats, down the Pasig River to Malacanalang.

Later, when she asked them to join her onstage, Erwin, in jumpers, Jason, in

cream-colored pants and a striped shirt, and Jonas, in combat fatigues and a white T-shirt, gingerly emerged from the left wing of the stage.

Ms Macapagal thanked them for their letters and for "reminding all of us why we are here in this session hall right now."

She exhorted the senators and congressmen to promise the boys "to be ready to make sacrifices and unite for the good, success and stability of the country and the future of the children."

The three were among more than 30 children from Payatas who had sent letters asking for the President's help.

"They're just regular kids. After this affair, we will bring them back to their families," said Julia Abad, executive assistant to Social and Welfare Development Secretary Dinky Soliman.

A Cabinet source said Ms Macapagal had tasked Housing Secretary Michael Defensor with looking after the welfare of Jason, Erwin and Jonas.

Cynical, impressed

Lawmakers were either genuinely impressed or cynical about what some viewed as an inspired gesture and others saw as a mere publicity stunt with people for props. One way or the other, the move earned her a standing ovation and the longest applause from both the floor and the galleries.

Opposition Sen. Luisa "Loi" Estrada quipped that it was "like a fairy tale—with all those paper boats."

She said the whole idea was no different from that employed by the Ramos administration when it "adopted" Mang Pandoy, a timid slum dweller symbolizing the Filipino Everyman.

"Nothing came out of that, but I hope this time there will be real results," the former first lady said.

Sen. Manuel Villar called Ms Macapagal's choice to call the children onstage "a refreshing approach in delivering her message to the masses."

"It's sort of a show biz (sarcasm), but I think this is what we really need these days, fresh approaches," he added.

Another opposition lawmaker, San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, smiled when asked to comment, saying: "It's just style. I don't comment on style."

Administration Sen. Joker Arroyo described the President's performance as "Cinoman," without elaborating.

Moved to tears

House committee on appropriations chair Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. said he was nearly moved to tears by the President's challenge to lawmakers to help Jason, Erwin and Jonas and all Filipino children like them.

When "we lawmakers get back to work starting tomorrow, whatever deci-

sions we make, we will make with the face of Jason, Erwin and Jonas in our minds," Andaya said.

But opposition Sen. Rodolfo Biazon was more skeptical.

"I hope the kids do not end up like Mang Pandoy," said Biazon as he noted that the public relations ploy could blow up in Ms Macapagal's face.

He did, however, say that the President's Sona set the country "in the right direction."

"The objectives and targets are achievable," he said.

People Power Coalition Sen. Francis Pangilinan took exception to comparisons made between the three kids and Mang Pandoy, who still lives in a Marikina shanty in grueling poverty despite the promises made and opportunities offered by former President Fidel V. Ramos.

"These three kids are different. Because unlike Mang Pandoy, they are still young and they have a long future before them," said Pangilinan.

"We can invest in their future. . . There is more hope because they belong to the new generation to which all our children belong," said the congressman.

Neophyte Rep. Ted Facon (Leyte), who used to anchor a public service program featuring many tales of poverty, told reporters: "Let's give the President a chance, then judge her come 2004."

She's popular, but can she rule Indonesia?

(From page A1)

Although she is adored by millions of loyal followers, many doubt whether "Mega," as she is affectionately known, will be able to match Sukarno's fighting spirit and charisma.

Her greatest challenge will be holding together the vast nation-archipelago, which her expansionist father helped create.

Still, it is sweet revenge for Megawati, who in 1999 saw the presidency of the world's largest Muslim-populated nation snatched from her because she was a woman.

At the time, she burst into tears, robbed of the country's top job despite her party's election victory because of the objections of a coalition of Muslim parties, which on Monday did a U-turn to back her unanimously.

Megawati assumed power under cir-

cumstances similar to both those that led to her father's political demise and that resulted in the downfall of Joseph Estrada.

Like Wahid, Sukarno was impeached and sacked amid allegations of misuse, and died in disgrace under house arrest in 1970.

Sukarno was driven from office in 1966 by Suharto, an army general who ruled with an iron fist for 32 years.

Much of Megawati's popularity is rooted in her pedigree. She is the eldest daughter of Sukarno, who declared independence from Dutch colonial rule after World War II.

Often likened to President Macapagal-Arroyo, the new Indonesian president has dismissed the comparisons by saying that Ms Macapagal is Ms Macapagal and Megawati is Megawati.

On Sunday—a day ahead of her rise

to the presidency—Megawati was meeting with the country's other political party leaders, friend and foe alike.

Rumors that Megawati has never confirmed say she wanted the parties to agree not to challenge her presidency until the end of her term before accepting the post—fearful of going out of the same door as Wahid.

Analysts have warned that while Megawati has the people behind her, she still has a hard time with Jakarta's powerful elite.

They also point with growing concern to what most see as her Achilles heel, her husband, businessman and former MP Taufik Kiemas, who is accused of shady deals and influence peddling.

Symbol of resistance

The Indonesian leader rose to national prominence in 1996, when the Suharto's troops attacked her party headquarters.

Although Megawati herself was never in any danger, she became a symbol of resistance.

Megawati's Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle won the most votes in the country's first-ever free elections in 1999. But she was outmaneuvered by Wahid, a politically astute Muslim cleric who landed the top job when Congress elected him president in October of that year.

Megawati has been married three times and has three children. She attended two universities but did not graduate, and she entered politics relatively late.

Like her father, Megawati's strongest support is among the uneducated and poor, who have been badly hit by Indonesia's worst economic crisis in a generation.

'Mannequin'

But despite her vast following, many doubt she has the political savvy and in-

tellectual heft required to steer Indonesia out of its political and economic malaise.

"Megawati has no strategy of how she wants to run the country," said leading political analyst Sam Sadi.

People who work with her privately complain she has little patience for details and that her ability to understand political, economic, and security issues is limited.

"Mega has no position on anything," said John Roesa, a historian of Southeast Asia at the University of California at Berkeley. "It's quite clear that she's just a mannequin."

Unlike her father, Megawati shuns the limelight. She rarely gives interviews or makes public speeches and relies heavily on a small circle of advisers. She has never spoken publicly about what policies she would pursue as president

and mentioned none during her inaugural speech Monday.

Links to military

Her close links to the military worry many because of the armed forces' history of human rights abuses and their support for Suharto's dictatorship.

She meets regularly with military commanders, and several retired generals are high-ranking members of her party.

Salim said if Megawati becomes head of state, reforms within the military and a push to end its long-running role in politics would stop.

He said Megawati was likely to order the military to crush armed separatist rebellions in the restive provinces of Aceh and Irian Jaya. Wahid has favored negotiations to end those rebellions.

"This is just the kind of figurehead the generals need," Roesa said. **AP, AFP**

Drilon by 1 vote, JDV by landslide

(From page A1)

and abuses of the government." Ople said in his speech.

The oppos. non were particularly indignant over the President's alleged meddling in the Senate presidency race when she made known her preference for Drilon.

"This leaves us no choice but to exercise an aggressive fiscalizing role," Ople added.

Pimentel also said the situation in the Senate would now be such that they will "scrutinize everything with a fine-tooth comb."

"We will ask for no favors and they cannot expect any quarters from us," he said.

Healthy

But the administration senators is undaunted by the opposition's declaration of war, saying that this will contribute to a healthy two-party system in the Senate.

"In a very closely divided Senate, I think everyone will start behaving," said Sen. Joker Arroyo, who will get the post of blue ribbon committee.

Other winners

In yesterday's vote, all the 12 senators who had signed a manifesto to vote for Drilon kept to their promise.

They are Senators Renato Cayetano, Robert Bautista, Juan Flavio Lorea, Legarda, Joker Arroyo, Ralph Recto, Francis Pangilinan, Manuel Villar, Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Ramon Revilla, and independent John Osmena and Noli de Castro.

But as Senate tradition dictates, Drilon voted for Pimentel and Pimentel voted for Drilon.

Those for Pimentel were Senators

Edgardo Angara, Teresa Aquino-Oreta, Vicente Sotto, Blas F. Ople, Rodolfo Biazon, Loi Ejercito-Estrada, Panfilo Lacson and Gregorio Honasan.

Also for Pimentel were PPC Sen. Sergio Osmeña and independent Robert Jaworski.

Villar was voted Senate president pro-tempore; Legarda, majority floor leader (the first woman senator to assume such post); and Pimentel, minority floor leader.

The three-hour ceremony marking the opening of the 12th Senate was marked by civil, but heated debates between the opposing camps.

Buy one, take one

In a speech, Pimentel described the term-sharing agreement between Drilon and Cayetano as a "take off from the buy-one-take-two schemes that department stores often resort to dispose of their wares that are not moving fast."

Presidential spokesperson R. Gilberto Tiglao also doubted the wisdom of a proposed term-sharing arrangement between Drilon and Cayetano.

"The senators will determine if there is such a power-sharing. In my view, that is not appropriate. When the senators elect their president, power is shared among the 24 senators," Tiglao said.

Arroyo tried to justify the disunion in the Senate. It was right for the administration and opposition senators to draw the battle lines, he said as the diversity would enrich the "two-party system."

Noting how "bitter" was the fight between the two blocs in the last elections, Arroyo said they could not be expected to "side with the enemy."

Independence

Almost all of the opposition senators justified their vote for Pimentel by saying that they wanted to keep the Upper Chamber's independence.

This argument earned a sharp rebuke from Recto who, in explaining his vote for Drilon, said the opposition senators cannot speak of independence as they were biased when they voted to leave unopened an envelope containing damaging evidence during the impeachment trial against former President Estrada.

Deodorant

He also noted how the opposition might have used Pimentel as a "tool" to deodorize their tarnished credibility.

But the remark quickly elicited a reply from Sotto who reminded Recto that "we think before we speak in this August body."

In reaction, Recto later remarked: "In the House, we think before we vote" referring to Sotto's vote not to open the envelope during the impeachment trial. Drilon will need all his people skills to pull the Senate together. He did say something to that effect. He said he will work to unite the two blocs in the Senate to assure the passage of Malacanalang's pet bills.

Showered with praise

In contrast to the election of Drilon, De Venecia's installation was showered with praises (*Story on Page 1A*).

He was nominated by Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. with five other seconding the nomination, which crushed De Venecia's rival, Nueva Viscaya Rep. Carlos Padilla.

De Venecia won with 184 votes to Padilla's 17. Only San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora abstained from voting.

Padilla and Makati Rep. Agapito "Buz" Aquino will share the tenure of the minority floor leader for the next three years. Padilla will be minority floor leader for the first year and will yield to Aquino in the last two years.

De Venecia devoted much of his inaugural speech detailing his "747 Economic Action Plan," a legislative strategy aspiring to lead the country back to the growth curve posted during his first two terms as Speaker during the Ramos administration.

He promised to transform the House into an "activist, reformist, achievement- and performance-oriented" body, saying it should work to "lift the pain, gloom and doom, of fear and loathing that has oppressed the national life."

His 747 master plan, he said, seeks to address "the single biggest task" of the House, which is to rein in the national budget deficit, with an ambitious bid to have "a balanced budget and surplus by the time our term ends."

As to where to get the money to tame the deficit, De Venecia pointed to the \$ 0-billion Official Development Assistance fund from Japan and Europe which the country had access to but had not actually tapped for lack of the required counterpart funding.

"This huge pool of funds is untapped and unutilized because the President and Congress have failed all these years to provide the 25 percent counterpart funds of \$2.5 billion or P125 billion," he said in his 15-minute speech.

Within two to three years under the plan, he said, Congress should provide this counterpart fund to capture the \$10 billion and thus provide the government with a total fund of \$12.5 billion or P625 billion.

In order to come up with the counterpart fund, the government should improve tax collection "without imposing new taxes." For potential government funds, the coconut levy and Marcos wealth cases must be resolved as they involve P70 billion and \$650 million, respectively.

The Speaker also proposed the equity securitization of up to \$1 billion of a portion of the national government share of the Malampaya offshore national gas project in Palawan.

The ODA fund, he explained, would be enough to build 250,000 houses a year or plant 1 billion trees, among others, in the process creating jobs and encouraging new entrepreneurs especially in the rural areas.

"The provision of this fund will enable us to use our own internally generated funds to augment the limited funds for education, health, agriculture and infrastructure and to modernize the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police since ODA cannot be utilized for purposes of external or internal defense," he explained.

Use BOT

In order to "ease the pressure on Congress" to provide capital funds for development, he asked individual congressmen, governors and mayors should use the "successful" Build-Operate-Transfer Law in realizing infrastructure projects in their communities "at no cost" to the host local government unit.

The Speaker also asked LGUs to "campaign for investments" in their respective areas by attracting affluent Filipinos abroad into entering into BOT arrangements with the provincial government at \$500,000 to \$1 million per project.

'Runaway horse'

Describing the budget deficit as a "runaway horse" De Venecia said the shortfall is expected to shrink progressively until the Macapagal administration ends in 2004.

Government projects a deficit of P145 billion this year, about P130 billion next year, an estimated P80 billion in 2003 and P50 billion in 2004, he said.

De Venecia recalled his past triumphs.

"When he had the privilege to be Speaker twice from 1992 to 1998, mobilizing the (House) Committees of Appropriations and Ways and Means and the Departments of Budget and Management and Finance under President Ramos, we managed to balance the budget and achieved modest surpluses in 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997 until the Asian financial crisis struck in July (1997) and, complicated by corruption and inefficiency, as a result, created huge holes of deficit of P50 billion in 1998, P111 billion in 1999, and P 20-billion in 2000."

Tap internal assets

In order to achieve growth, De Venecia said, the country must tap "internal assets" while it awaits "forward movement" in the economies of the US, Japan and Europe, and for Argentina and similarly situated nations to sort out their economic problems.

"Before, (Philippine) growth was led by the outward strategy—exports and investment-led—that was strongly dependent on foreign investments. Today, however, our main markets and sources of investments and capital, the US and Japan, and also Europe, are in various stages of decline," he said. *With a report from Rocky Nazareno*

PIATCO-Terminal 3

A betrayal of the Filipino people



Speculations are rife that the NAIA Terminal 3 project is a convenient milking cow of the family owners of PIATCO, with the tacit consent of the highest ranking official of the DOTC. To cover up these speculations, PIATCO has made the following claims:

PIATCO claims that they won the contract fair and square, but they have concealed the fact that the contract was changed three times under the Erap administration by adding amendments and supplements that radically altered the essence of the bid in favor of PIATCO.

PIATCO claims the Agreement is favorable to the Government of the Philippines (GRP) because they have guaranteed payments totalling P17.75 billion in 25 years. But PIATCO does not mention that NAIA already earned P1.25 billion in 1999 alone and will earn at least P31.25 billion in 25 years. Therefore, the PIATCO contract would result in GRP losses of more than P13.5 billion in 25 years.

PIATCO claims not a single centavo will be taken from the Treasury of the Philippines to finance the construction of NAIA 3 and there is no direct government guarantee, subsidy or equity involved. But Section 8.03 of the Agreement requires the GRP to assume PIATCO's financial obligations to its foreign lenders if PIATCO defaults in its payment, in clear violation of Section 4-A of the BOT law. Furthermore, the contract also requires that the GRP will spend for the purchase of lands and the construction of access roads and other related infrastructures to facilitate the construction of NAIA 3.

PIATCO claims that NAIA 3 will truly be a world-class airport terminal. But how come certain airport officials are saying that PIATCO is using substandard materials, that PIATCO is getting commissions from its subcontractors, and that it is overpricing the cost of labor and materials to the detriment of its own German partners and the Philippine Government?

PIATCO claims that this new airport will be beneficial to the Filipino travelling public. But PIATCO did not tell the people that they have already advised the airlines of a 70% increase in rental rates. Doesn't PIATCO and DOTC Secretary Alvarez know that every tourist and every Filipino traveller will end up paying for all these rate increases?

It is unfortunate that in the haste to promote development and progress, the DOTC has chosen to cast a blind eye to the most flagrant violations against fundamental rights and violations of laws. We appeal to the DOTC, the MIAA and our legislators to review and amend the Concession Agreement in fairness to the Filipino people and to all concerned.

THE MIA-NAIA ASSOCIATION OF SERVICE OPERATORS

Jobs, housing, food, education . . .

(From page A1)

tice and the rule of law are concerned."

She explained that her display of concern for Estrada was an accommodation of the "feelings of the segments of our *masa* who have continued to identify with his personal circumstances."

To support her four-point agenda to lick mass poverty, the President appealed for a ceasefire on political bickering.

"From today, let us set aside bickering and politicking for at least one year," the President said.

"Instead of bickering, let us for one year, help each other for the betterment of our people," she said.

Free enterprise

Her four-point plan calls for free enterprise "with a social conscience . . . not a pitiless free-for-all," modernization of the agriculture sector, special programs for the disadvantaged and improvement in the "moral standards" of government and society.

Dressed in a pine green Muslim-inspired outfit, the President introduced three children from the Payatas dumpsite, who, she said, embodied her aspirations for the nation—jobs, education, a house for every family and food on every table. (Story on Page A1.)

The three boys nearly upstaged

the President as most of the 228 members of the House, 24 senators and guests in the gallery gave the children a standing ovation before the President finished her speech.

The jobless

The President acknowledged the nation's difficulties.

"From 2.5 million jobless four years ago, unemployment now stands at 4 million. From a budget surplus in 1997 of more than P1 billion under President Ramos, my government inherited a deficit exceeding P140 billion. In the same period, poverty incidence rose from 36.8 percent of the population in 1997 to 40 percent in the year 2000," she said.

"Our challenge is clear: eliminate poverty," Ms. Macapagal said.

While her administration received a "solid mandate" in the May 14 elections, she said she did not consider the results as a choice between the administration and the opposition camp allied with ousted President Estrada.

"I see it rather as a vote for all of us—administration and opposition—to roll up our sleeves, stop looking back and move forward, most especially in the fight against mass poverty," she said.

The enemy is us

The President said the greatest obstacle the nation must overcome was "inside us."

"The enemy to beat is ourselves," she said. "When we spread division rather than unity; when we put ourselves above country and profit above fairness; when we think the worst of those with whom we should be working for the common good and when we wallow in despair rather than rise to achievement. Indeed when we make politics replace patriotism in our country's hour of need."

The President paid tribute to the bloodless EDSA People Power I and II, and admitted that the EDSA III staged by supporters of Estrada had humbled her.

She said these uprisings showed the transfer of power over the state from the traditional economic and political bosses to the people.

"Last May 1, the poor raised their voices in anger and their fists in fury. Imprisoned in poverty, shackled to shame, denied justice in society, they personally delivered the message that, 100 years after they revolted to establish this nation, they had yet to partake of the national dream," the President said.

Humbled

"I heard their message loud and I was humbled," she said.

Because the majority of the poor are in the countryside, the President said her administration would spend P20 billion for irrigation, post-harvest facilities, infrastructure and research to modernize agriculture.

"There can be a million new jobs in agriculture and fisheries. Within the year, the (Department of Agriculture) shall begin to implement the program to generate them," she said.

The President said that starting to-

day she would hold office at the Department of Agriculture "until we can see the million new jobs get off the ground."

Ms. Macapagal also said 10,000 out-of-school youths would be given emergency employment.

To ensure sufficient rice supply, she said the monopoly of the National Food Authority to import rice would be set aside for the meantime. She said that the private sector would be allowed to import rice as long as they pay the customs duties and that a thousand rolling stores would be deployed to sell cheap rice.

She said her administration would resolve the coconut levy funds in favor of the farmers.

Land reform

The President said she would redeem her father's commitment to land reform and shall distribute 100,000 hectares of public land and 100,000 ha of private lands, including 100 ancestral domains for indigenous peoples, every year.

The President said the urban poor also needed immediate relief from economic hardships.

She promised to give security of land tenure to 150,000 families each year, saying she is saddened each time she sees "squatters in their own country."

She said 10,000 housing units for workers and the poor would be made available each year.

Ms. Macapagal formally asked Congress to create a Department of Housing to spur mass housing and generate jobs.

"Mark this, P20 billion for housing for the poor. This is the gift of the government for the security of the Filipino family," she said.

The President said 80,000 urban poor families had already benefited from the land distribution scheme during her six-month old administration.

Wage adjustment

To address high prices and low pay, the President asked Congress and the regional wages and productivity boards to act on demands for higher minimum wages.

"I hope that Congress or the wage boards would decide what is the right wage," she said. For the meantime, she reiterated her appeal to the employers to give their workers emergency cost of living allowance, which she said could be credited to any future wage adjustment.

The President said the government was keeping a tight watch on oil prices and would keep the LRT fares at their current rates.

Ms. Macapagal said that prices of medicines for the poor would be cut in half and that 500,000 urban poor families would be covered by Philhealth insurance.

To ease the tax burden on workers, the President urged Congress to adopt gross income taxation and to widen the categories of tax exemptions.

She did not forget Mindanao.

The President said she would bring the fight against poverty to Mindanao, which she would turn into the gateway to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

She vowed to put an end to the Abu Sayyaf problem.

"But it must end and it will end soon, for good. The leadership of the Abu Sayyaf has started to fall. The crackdown has neutralized 130 of

them," she said.

Culture of plain talk

The President said her administration was introducing a new culture in governance—a culture of plain talk and common sense.

"Cabinet secretaries will do less cluster and interagency committee work so that they can concentrate on running their departments," she said.

The President said her Cabinet was under a 12-month deadline to produce tangible results in their respective areas.

She said that the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission was empowered to investigate and prosecute grafters in high places and that the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and Bureau of Customs would be turned into showcases of graft-free agencies.

Ms. Macapagal said she was throwing her full support behind BIR Commissioner Rene Banez, who she said had received threats for his plan to revamp the agency.

"This man needs friends, who share his goals, and I know he will find them in this young Congress," she said.

"But the government cannot do it alone. I am not a miracle worker. All of us must do our share," she said.

On reviving the economy, she urged everyone to "think Filipino, buy Filipino, invest Filipino."

"I invite the taipans and other business people all over the country to start pump-priming the economy by investing once again in the Philippines," she said. "I invite you to create jobs, accelerate progress and thereby address the root causes of the crime and unrest that so much alarm us."

Cops fire shots to stop protesters in Pampanga

BY THE PDI BUREAU

FIRING warning shots, policemen yesterday tried to prevent protesters in five buses and jeeps from leaving Pampanga for Metro Manila to join rallies during President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (Sona).

Elsewhere in the provinces, militant groups mounted street rallies to present their own issues and accounts of the "real" state of the country.

Leaders of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) in Central Luzon said the police stopped about 500 of their members at the San Fernando tollgate of the North Luzon Expressway at 11:15 a.m.

Touton David, spokesperson of the Workers Alliance for Central Luzon, claimed that a certain Superintendent Pinpin tried to confiscate the licenses of the bus drivers.

When the police officer refused to let the buses leave the gate, the protesters decided to alight and stage a picket for 20 minutes, causing traffic jams at the Dolores Junction in San Fernando, David said.

After negotiations, the policemen allowed the group to proceed to Metro Manila.

Roman Poliman, Bayan-Central Luzon chair, said at least two policemen, believed assigned to Camp Olivas' regional mobile group, fired their M-14 rifles in an attempt to disperse the protesters.

The protesters ducked for safety. No one was reported hurt.

Poliman said Pinpin ordered his men to retrieve the spent bullets.

Senior Supt. Alen Bantolo, regional police intelligence chief, said he would order an investigation of the incident.

Bantolo said police commands in Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales were ordered on Sunday to go on a "heightened alert" to ensure that the President's delivery of her Sona would go on smoothly.

Women activists from the Pagkakarana ng Kababahan para sa Inang Bayan (Kasaka) managed to pass the police checkpoints unnoticed, according to its chair, Sonia Soto.

They had Kasaka banners and posters in their skirts, she said. Others tucked the materials in their shirts.

Soto said the President's "Gloria Labandem" image was only a myth. "Her administration is not promissed as her reelected image would like us to believe. Her administration is potentially anti-masses because it has not significantly and concretely addressed the issues of landlessness, joblessness and homelessness in the last six months," Soto said.

In Baguio City, about 50 students marched down Session Road and later joined militant groups in the Cordillera for a people's summit that was lined with the Sona.

Among the issues that the groups wanted the President to address are wage increase, stop in oil price increases, the stop of foreign funded projects that threaten the life, land and resources of indigenous peoples; and the swift and fair trial of ousted President Joseph Estrada and his cronies.

In Lucena City, militant groups yesterday decried alleged "militarization" and human rights violations in an alternative Sona to present the "true state" of Southern Tagalog.

About 2,000 farmers, fishermen, workers, students and women joined the protest action.

In a statement, Pastor Mel Abesamis, Bayan regional leader, said 10 military and police battalions were now spread all over the provinces in Southern Tagalog.

He said the "Oplan Makabayan" and "Oplan Hahol Tamaraw" were being initiated by the AFP's Task Force Bantahaw in Mindoro as part of the militarization of Southern Tagalog.

Abesamis also cited the presence of the 16th Infantry Battalion in Eastern Mindoro, 1st IB in Laguna, and the 74th and 76th IBs in Quezon.

About 2,600 members of militant groups staged separate marches in Bacolod and Iloilo cities.

In Iloilo City, about 2,000 people, mostly slum-dwellers, workers and students joined a rally led by Bayan, the party-list group Bayan Muna and the League of Filipino Students in their own version of the Sona.

They later converged on the grounds of the Museo Iloilo for a mock presentation of the television soap "Pangako Sa 'Yo."

In Bacolod, about 100 persons gathered at the Fountain of Justice in Bacolod for a rally initiated by Sanlakas and the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino.

They also held a noise barrage at about 4 p.m. as the President was delivering her Sona.

About 500 persons participated in a Bayan-led rally at the Welcome Rotunda of the city plaza.

In Davao City, some 1,000 members of militant and student groups trooped to the streets.

Ariel Casilio, secretary general of Anakbayan-Southern Mindanao said it was time for the people to hold the President accountable to her promises.

"It's time to collect her debts to Filipinos," he said.

Dr. Robinson Montalba, spokesperson of the Promotion for Church People's Response, said that based on the records of the Department of Foreign Affairs, 2,100 Filipinos are leaving the country everyday because of lack of job opportunities.

In Butuan City, around 500 members of militant groups held a rally at the Rizal Park.

Bayan Muna's Gene Frisco said the Macapagal administration, just like its predecessors, continued to be "behind to the interests and dictates of foreign and local capitalists."

Tribal organizations lambasted the administration's alleged continued militarization in the countryside.

Ruel Badbaran, chair of the Kahugpungan sa mga Lumad-Northern Mindanao, claimed that military operations in San Luis, Agusan del Sur have resulted in the displacement of civilians and violations of human rights.

Reports from *Tonette Orjina* and *Jim Maitig*, *PDI Central Luzon Desk*; *Desiree Calura*, *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*; *Romulo O. Ponte*, *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*; *Nedra P. Burdon Jr.* and *Carla P. Gomez*, *PDI Visayas Bureau*; and *Joel Escorilla* and *Kristina E. Cassion*, *PDI Mindanao Bureau*.

No talking in the rain for Cabinet, protesters

(From page A1)

change of views regarding the administration's program of action and how this related to so-called "basic problems of the country" being raised by the protesters.

In the end, all what the participants in the supposed dialogue got was a drenching in the heavy downpour.

"We're here to listen to what they have to say and to ask them to listen to what we have to say," Social Welfare Secretary Corason Dinky Soliman told reporters.

Soliman, one of the leaders of EDSA People Power II in January that ousted Joseph Estrada, said it wasn't hard to relate to leaders of militant groups that also took part in the historic event that swept Ms. Macapagal to the presidency.

"This isn't the proper time to hold a dialogue," Bayan Muna Representative-elect Satur Ocampo said outside the Batasang Pambansa complex where militant groups held their own "People's Sona" amid a heavy downpour.

According to him, leaders of people's organizations were already holding a continuing dialogue with the President at least once a month in which she would brief them on what her administration was doing.

"Despite these dialogues, we don't see any progression toward actual action," Ocampo said.

Wilson Fortaleza, president of Sanlakas, shared Ocampo's statement.

"Kwentong-kwentuhan lang. There were handshakes but there were no substantial talks about the pressing reforms needed by the country," he said.

But Benjamin Abalos, chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority, wasn't giving up on the militant groups.

"There is a real need for us to sit

down and dialogue. There are so many issues that we have to discuss," Abalos said.

"All what the Macapagal administration is asking is a year before its reform agenda produces concrete results," he said.

Soliman, Abalos, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, Anti-Poverty Commission Chair Gino Delos, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council Chair Michael Defensor went down the Sandiganbayan building and joined the thousands of protesters around 2 p.m.

Despite the heavy rains, they stayed way into the night until all the protest leaders had delivered their speeches lambasting the administration for its alleged failures.

Numbers

The rally ended peacefully, unlike in previous Sonas. Both police and rally organizers honored their agreement that the protesters would only be allowed up to the corner of Commonwealth Avenue and IRP Road.

Deputy Director General Edgar Galvante, Metro Manila police chief, said about 7,500 policemen were deployed to secure the Batasan Complex and the roads leading to it.

He estimated the crowd at 10,000 before the heavy rains fell.

But rally organizers said they were able to mobilize at least 20,000 people.

Information officers of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) said their group swelled to 10,000 when their march arrived at the Sandiganbayan Fortaleza said Sanlakas and its allied groups were able to mobilize "at least 16,000."

Around 300 Estrada supporters un-

der the People's Movement against Poverty (PMAP) marched around the Elliptical Road around noon.

They did not proceed to the Batasan and instead marched toward the Veterans' Medical Memorial Center where Estrada is kept under hospital arrest.

Riot policemen did not allow the PMAP protesters to get near the hospital.

At around 11:45 a.m., Sanlakas members flew kites, dubbed "Saranggola sa Gloria," at the intersection of Batasan and Commonwealth.

The kites were labeled "presyo ng bilihan (price of goods)," "presyo ng langis (oil prices)," "peso-solar rate" "bilang ng naguguguhin (number of hungry people)" to symbolize the escalating cost of living and worsening poverty.

One of the high lights of the Bayan rally was the swearing in of Bayan Muna party-list representatives Satur Ocampo, Liza Maza and Crispis Beltran.

The Commission on Elections has yet to proclaim them as winners in the recent elections.

While the protesters were shouting slogans and waving banners, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office was busy distributing *lugaw* (rice porridge) in four barangays around the Batasang Pambansa complex.

More of the same

Carol Araullo, convenor of the watchdog group Plunder Watch, said the Macapagal administration should go beyond "its boxed solution to the problem of poverty."

"Granting that her intentions are good, if (her administration) does not change the mindset, nothing will happen," she said.

Teodoro Casio of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan also harped on

the same theme.

"The President's plans may appear no-nonsense and hands-on, but what she's offering is simply more of the same old things. There's nothing radically new in her speech that can make any real difference in the lives of the common folk," he said.

"She can tell us all her wonderful plans to eradicate poverty, but as long as her government adheres to the framework of imperialist globalization and swallows hook, line and sinker the policy dictates of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization, she is bound to fail."

The militant Kiusang Maghbukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) described the administration's fight against poverty as "pure empty talk for the poor."

Christians

Kaalagad Katipunanang Kristiyano, a gathering of militant Catholics and Protestants, also joined what it called a "celebration of the People's Sona."

In a statement, Kaalagad said the "trend will continue down II and the majority will turn cynical."

But Kaalagad urged Catholics and Protestants alike to "hold on to the Great Promise and keep faith with the poor."

In a crisis situation, Kaalagad said, there is a temptation on to succumb to paralytic despair to be content to rave and rant and lay the blame elsewhere."

Instead, Kaalagad prayed, "Lord, lead us not into that temptation and to hold fast to God's great promise that we can make the world better . . . Rather than surrender to cynicism . . . to dream with the *anawim*—the poor of Yahweh—and transform those dreams into reality." With reports from Ceres Doyo and Norman Bardadora.

Cheers from business, jeers from Loi

(From page A1)

bickering. Sen. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito appeared piqued when the President proposed a bill allowing the Office of the Ombudsman to hire private lawyers.

Ejercito said "it's almost as if she was telling this Congress (to convict (my husband)). It appears that she wants more private prosecutors (for this purpose), that's how I saw it."

Copycat

Asked to comment on Ms. Macapagal's anti-poverty strategy, Ejercito said it was "full of promises, but I gave her credit for pursuing the pro-poor programs of President Estrada, like the creation of 1 million jobs in the agriculture sector."

It only showed that the Estrada administration "had the right priorities" all along, the senator said.

She noted that the President's pro-poor programs as itemized in the Sona "seems to be merely repeating (that of my husband's). The 'Rolling Stores'—that's Estrada's."

But market analysts find the President's speech supportive of the business community.

They said the President's statement that laws must be "interpreted in favor of market enterprises" should give some hope to the stock market amid the current political and economic uncertainties.

Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas said the President's efforts to reduce corruption and unnecessary government spending should send positive signals to the market.

Luz Lorenzo, ATR Kim Eng Securities head of research, said Ms. Macapagal "showed that her heart is in the right place and she knows her priorities. The program is not ambiguous."

"I think these are very concrete steps to help jumpstart the economy and minimize corruption," Roxas said, taking note of the President's promise to support the crackdown against currency speculators, strengthen the police and push for key legislative reforms needed to boost confidence.

Personal Equity Retirement Act or Pora,

which encourages employees and self-employed individuals to create a retirement fund to complement the services offered by the Social Security System and the Government Service and Insurance System;

Revised Investment Company Act, which seeks to update the four-decade old Investment Company Act and removes restrictive provisions that hinder the development of the mutual fund industry; and,

Securitization Act, which aims to promote long-term housing finance, combined with the elimination of the documentary stamp tax on secondary trades.

The President also reiterated that she was supportive of amendments to the Securities Regulation Code.

Brokers were complaining that several stringent provisions of this law, such as the broker-dealer segregation rule, were detrimental to the market.

Roxas also noted that the shift to gross income taxation mentioned by the President was a welcome move as this would minimize harassment from some corrupt Bureau of Internal Revenue agents as far as tax assessments were concerned.

Gross income taxation, according to businessmen, would leave very little room for maneuvering since it would do away with the tedious system of tax deductions.

Positive note

AB Capital Securities analyst Jose Vistan said the market would likely trade on the positive note today because earlier concerns that there would be bloody demonstrations during the Sona did not materialize.

Although he believed the speech still lacked specifics, he said the positive tone should provide some positive signals to the market.

"She has laid down the goals of the government and now that she has the cooperation of both houses of Congress, it will be a doable program," Vistan said.

But other analysts said the promises made during the Sona might not be realistic.

Mark Securities chief market strategist Manuel Cruz said: "There's a lot on the agenda and it's very hard to believe that this could be achieved especially with the government's big bud-

get deficit. You don't know where they will get the cash to fulfill them so it seems like it's a tall order."

On the peace and order situation, for instance, Cruz said the President had long promised that she would bring an end to the Abu Sayyaf crisis in Mindanao the soonest time possible. But he said the country had yet to see positive results.

In Zamboanga City, District Customs collector lawyer Lourdes Mangaoang said she was glad that the President acknowledged the efforts of Customs officials in improving their revenue collections.

In Isabela City in Basilan, while the President was delivering her Sona, Virginia Rosadeno, mother of hostage Maria Fe Rosadeno, was counting her remaining minutes to sustain her and her son Pastor Randy Rosadeno's expenses as they work for the release of her daughter who is now in the hands of the Abu Sayyaf.

Inside a room provided by the religious community here at the Christian Formation Center, Virginia said she hoped the President's promise would come true.

"I hope she could find a way to rescue my daughter and the other hostages who are poor like us," she said.

MILF spokesperson Eul Kabalu described the President's speech on peace and development as "Okay *naman* because she made mention of the peace process in Mindanao and her intention to pursue this plan."

"We are for peaceful resolution to Mindanao's problem but we don't give a time frame," Kabalu said.

"Good!" was North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol's reaction to the President's plan to turn over the Malitubog-Mandugao irrigation project in Carmen town, to the Army Engineering Brigade if not completed by September.

"It's good news for us," Piñol said. The governor said the project has been delayed because "everybody wants a piece of the cake."

A leader of a farmer's group in Isabela described the President's speech as "empty and plain promises."

Melchor Batalla, president of the Dangayyan dagiti Munnalon ti Isabela, said Ms. Macapagal's first six months

'Thorpedo' smashes own record

MELBOURNE—Australia's newspapers celebrated Olympic hero Ian "Thorpedo" Thorpe's latest world record on Monday, comparing the teenager with swimming great Dawn Fraser. Thorpe, 18, the Olympic title holder and defending world champion in the 400 metres freestyle, set his 10th long-course world record with a time of 3:40.17 at the world championships in Fukuoka, Japan, on Sunday.

Reuters

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Age-group tennis listing on

REGISTRATION is now going on for the Phila Classic III Age Group Championships slated Aug. 4-5 and Aug. 10-12 at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Events on lap are boys' and girls' 18-under, 16-under, 14-under, 12-under and unisex 10-under divisions. Players may register at the Phila office (tel. 525-64-34). Deadline of entry is on Aug. 2 at 12 noon. Entry fee is P200.

4-YEAR SLUMP ENDS

Duval wins British Open by 3

LYTHAM ST. ANNES, England -- The massive crowd that swelled up on David Duval walking up the 18th fairway in the British Open didn't faze him.

He had seen it all before—only it was always someone else's party.

Tiger Woods and Vijay Singh at the last two Masters, Woods at St. Andrews last year, when the closest Duval got to the silver claret jug was on the flight home.

On Sunday, a celebration long overdue was all his. "It's a wonderful experience," Duval said Sunday "I'd go through it again."

Duval refused to let the British Open turn into the 18-hole shootout everyone expected, seizing control with a rock-solid game that carried him to a 4-under 67 and gave him the prize that had eluded him the past four years.

He never looked at a leaderboard through those wraparound sunglasses. He didn't have to. Duval always believed he had the mettle to withstand the pressure of golf's sternest test, and the silver claret jug he held aloft was the greatest proof of all.

"I did everything I needed to do," he said. "I feel really good about that."

The stoic expression hardly ever changed until the last putt fell. Only then did Duval peel off the shades and blink in the bright sunlight over Royal Lytham & St. Annes, finally able to call himself a major champion.

"I don't know if I can savor this any more than I do now," he said. "I imagine what it would do is intensify my desire to do it again."

Duval finished at 274 for a three-stroke victory over Niclas Fasth of Sweden, the only one among a long list of proven players who sustained any kind of challenge.

Former Masters champion Ian Woosnam might have been one of them. But after nearly making an ace on the opening hole, the Welshman realized he had an extra club in his bag and was assessed a two-stroke penalty.

Haunted by the costly mistake, Woosnam finished with a 71 and was four strokes back at 278 along with five others.

Three of them were major championship winners: Woosnam, two-time Masters champion Bernhard Langer and two-time U.S. Open champion Ernie Els. Duval takes his place among them.

The only player besides Woods to be ranked No. 1 in the past three years, Duval expected to be there all along.

Meanwhile, another major championship passed without Woods in serious contention.

Like so many others, Woods couldn't make enough birdies on a firm, fast links course littered with pot bunkers. He took triple bogey on the par-3 12th and



DUVAL: Finally nails the Big One.

wound up nine strokes behind in a tie for 25th, his worst finish in a major in nearly four years.

Final scores
274 - David Duval (USA) 68-73-65-67
277 - Niclas Fasth (Swe) 69-69-72-67
278 - Ernie Els (RSA) 71-71-67-69, Darren Clarke 70-69-69-70, Billy Mayfair (USA) 69-72-67-70, Miguel Angel Jimenez (Spa) 69-72-67-70, Ian Woosnam 72-68-67-71, Bernhard Langer (Ger) 71-69-67-71
279 - Mikko Ilonen (Fin) 68-75-70-66, Kevin Sutherland (USA) 75-69-68-67, Sergio Garcia (Spa) 70-72-67-70, Jesper Parnevik (Swe) 68-69-71-71
280 - Vijay Singh (FIJ) 70-70-71-69, Loren Roberts (USA) 70-70-70-70, Des Smyth 74-65-70-71, Billy Andrade (USA) 69-70-70-71, Retief Goosen (RSA) 74-68-67-71, Colin Montgomerie 65-70-73-72, Raphael Jacquelin (Fra) 71-68-69-72, Alex Cejka (Ger) 69-69-69-73

Immonen tops World Pool

AN EMOTIONAL Mika Immonen burst into tears as he became World Pool champion Sunday after a thrilling final at the Cardiff International Arena in Wales.

The Finnish-born New Yorker is the first European to win the Admiral World Championship trophy since 1996 as he beat Ralph "The Kaiser" Souquet in the race to 17 racks.

The match was delicately poised at 10-10 when Immonen suddenly found his form and reeled off the remaining seven racks to take the title.

"It feels good," he said. "I can't believe it. Somebody pinch me and wake me up. I wasn't sure it would be my year this year. About three years ago, I thought I'd win it and it didn't work out, so I went into each match with a different perspective this time around and it worked."

Immonen reached the finals by beating Canada's Alain Martel, who defeated Filipino Leonardo "The Rattlesnake" Andam in a controversial quarterfinal match that ended Andam's bid.

Andam lost, 11-9, but not after he was slapped a foul shot by the referee, a call that didn't sit well with the crowd that included many Filipinos.

Before the foul shot, Andam rallied from 1-4 and 7-2 to lead, 9-8, in the Race-to-11 match.

The supposed foul shot, which Andam didn't agree to, saw the Filipino touch the 6-ball with the score at 9-9. Martel took advantage of it and won Rack 19 en route to clinching the match at 11-9.

Jones prevails

NEW ROCHELLE, New York — Rosie Jones birdied the final hole for a 1-under-par 70 Sunday that gave her a one-stroke victory over Laura Diaz in the LPGA Big Apple Classic, a tournament she had come close to winning three times.

It was the first time Americans finished 1-2 in an LPGA tournament since last year's Betsy King Classic, a span of 28 events. Americans held six of the seven top spots on the final leaderboard.

The 41-year-old Jones won for the second time this year and 12th time in her career. She finished third in this event in 1990 and second in 1993 and again last year by one stroke to Annika Sorenstam.

Dorothy Delasin of the Philippines shot a 68 and finished at 283, 15 shots adrift.

Ateneo de Davao dribblers shine

DAVAO City squads, led by Ateneo de Davao, nearly swept five divisions during last weekend's Mindanao elimination of the Adidas Streetball Challenge 2001 at Gasano Mall.

A 13-12 triumph in the sudden-death shootout by Team Chromium, built around a unit from Ateneo de Davao, over Team Exigence in the senior division spiced an afternoon of basketball action for fans which overflowed at the atrium of Gasano Mall.

Team Triumphant, composed of cagers from Holy Child School of Davao, routed Team Kobe, 25-8, in the junior division.

Prizes were awarded by Adidas Philippines Inc. man-

aging director John Alonzo, Adidas Philippines sales and marketing director Sonny Nebres, Tais Suzanne of the Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Wheelchair Basketball League Luis Arellano, Team Ventures head Emmanuel Penson and tournament director Charlie Dy.

Another Ateneo de Davao crew, Team North Rim, downed Team Elusive, 15-11, for the mid-level crown. Only the girls division escaped Davao City teams as Cagayan de Oro's Team St. Kilda downed Team Monitor of Zamboanga City, 16-10.

Team Zambada beat Team Pure, 14-6, to capture the Streetball-On-Wheels division, which drew a record 14 squads.

Peace chess slated

THE TENTH leg of the 2001 Philippine Executive Active Chess Express (Peace 2001) gets underway on July 28 at Land Bank's Multi-Purpose Hall in Makati City.

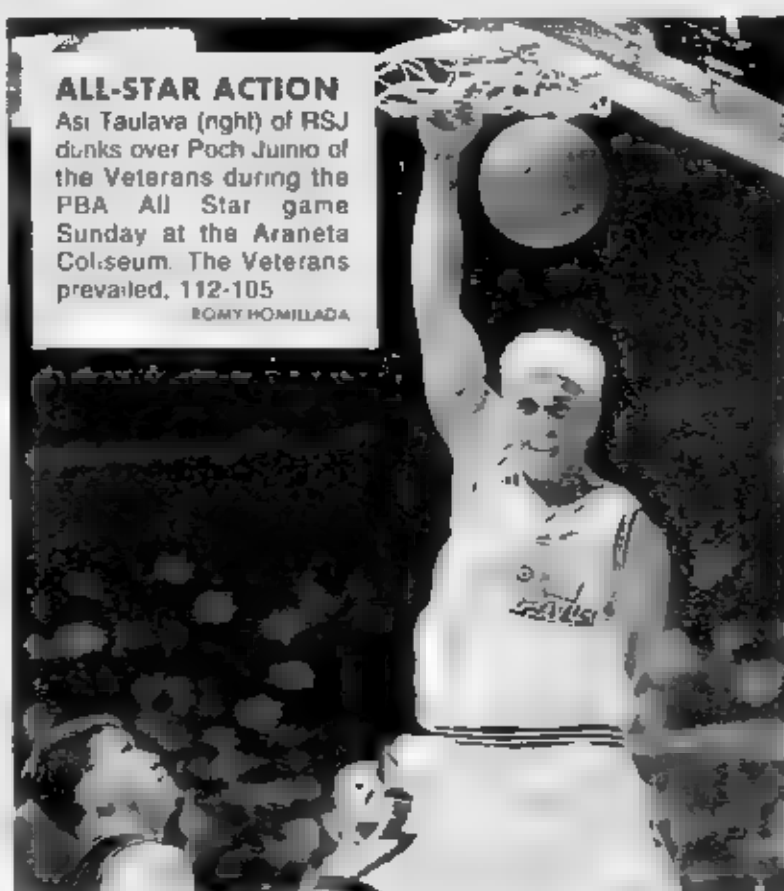
Business executives and professionals who want to have fun and relax playing Active Chess, contact the Aeca with tel. 892-8759 for details.

Peace 2001 is being sponsored by DNS Company and organized by the Active Chess Center of Asia in cooperation with Belgosa Media Systems, Land Bank, Tabilog Cargo Services, Topmost Engineering and Travel Café.

Carmona karting July 29

CARMONA, Racing Circuit, the "home of local karting," comes to life anew with the staging of the pivotal sixth leg of the 2001 Shell Super Karting championship on Sunday, July 29, in Carmona, Cavite.

Led by multi-awarded Pepos Marave of Demvel's and last year's PSA "Karter of the Year" awardee Philip Alendia of Kart 1, the country's top karters report back to action and resume their campaign in this eight-part kartfest.



ALL-STAR ACTION

Asi Taulava (right) of RSJ dunks over Poch Junio of the Veterans during the PBA All Star game Sunday at the Araneta Coliseum. The Veterans prevailed, 112-105.

ROMY HOMILADA

Stags gore Dolphins; Bombers rise to 4-0

BY JUNE NAVARRO

GAMES THURSDAY
(Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
12 noon—St. Benilde vs UPRR (Jr/Sr)
3 p.m.—Lalran vs Mapua (Jr/Sr)

SAN Sebastian College lived by its word shooting in the three-point area to subdue Philippine Christian University, 61-55, yesterday in the NCAA varsity basketball tournament at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Unchallenged in the trifecta territory, the Stags peppered the Dolphins with a deluge of treys in the final quarter and went on to pick up their second win in four starts.

In contrast, the Dolphins, playing catchup throughout, couldn't deliver beyond the arc as they flubbed seven of their tries during crunchtime en route to a 1-3 record in the eight-team tourney.

PBL veteran Mark Macapagal drained four triples to lead the Stags' charge with 16 points but it was Roy Falcasantos' three-pointer and a bank

shot off Omar Asmad in the dying seconds that made the difference.

It came after the Dolphins' mad dash in the stretch with rookie Leo Gaspi filling the scoring sack for the Taft-based dribblers.

The beefy, 6-foot-2 Gaspi hammered his frame inside, barreling 11 of his 13 markers in the fourth quarter to keep the Dolphins within striking distance.

Erman Epondulm topscored with 43 points as Jose Rizal University rapped San Beda College, 103-98, in the other seniors' game.

The Bombers streaked to their fourth straight victory, while the Red Lions slipped to 1-3.

Scores:
SSC 61—Macapagal 18, Reguerra 14, Coronel 8, Alford 6, Falcasantos 7, Moore 4, Gonzales 4, Najorda 0, Motales 0, De Leon 0, Uy 0.

PCU 55—Gaspi 18, Omolon 10, Asmad 6, Franco 7, Sanz 5, Dala 4, Iliaga 2, Gatdula 2, Roque 2, Agahan 2, Guibay 0, Legayada 0.

Quarters: 18-12, 42-28, 49-38, 61-55.

Roligon hosts derby today

AFICIONADOS will be treated again to another round of quality fights with the holding of the Peter Macky 4-Cock Derby today at the Roligon Mega Cockpit in Panahque City.

Hosted by Ronsei Tansada, known in the slashing world as "Peter Macky," the event will be participated in by the group of Juan Miguel Soliven of Cádiz City.

Kournikova marries hockey star player

LONDON—Russian tennis star Anna Kournikova has married ice hockey star player Sergei Fedorov in a private ceremony in Moscow, the Sun newspaper reported Monday in a front-page story.

The 20-year-old Kournikova, who has made millions in modeling and endorsement deals, wed the 31-year-old Fedorov at a registrar's office in the Russian capital, the paper said.

BASEBALL RESULTS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	57	41	.582	—
Boston	56	42	.571	1
Tampa Bay	47	52	.475	10 1/2
Baltimore	42	56	.433	14 1/2
Texas	32	67	.323	25 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	56	42	.571	—
Pittsburgh	54	44	.556	1
Florida	51	47	.518	2
New York	45	55	.450	12
Montreal	42	56	.433	14 1/2

COMPLETE RESULTS

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
San Diego	57	41	.582	—
Los Angeles	56	42	.571	1
San Francisco	52	47	.528	5 1/2
San Diego	49	51	.489	9 1/2
Colorado	41	57	.418	18

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	56	42	.571	—
St. Louis	54	44	.556	1
San Francisco	52	47	.528	2
San Diego	49	51	.489	5 1/2
Colorado	41	57	.418	18

Fans laud Lance

LUZ-ARDIDEN, France

—Lance Armstrong may make dashing to mountain tops on a bike look easy, but he knows it isn't, and so do his fans.

"People in the States don't realize the athleticism," said Bill Emery, a legal records manager from Arlington, Virginia, who followed Armstrong's last three mountain stages in the Tour de France.

"I ran a marathon and I didn't have to get up the next day and do another one," said his wife Helena Emery, a Washington D.C. attorney.

The couple is part of a small but visible number of American cycling fans who line the roads of France to watch the three-week, 20-stage Tour, arguably one of the toughest sports events in the world.

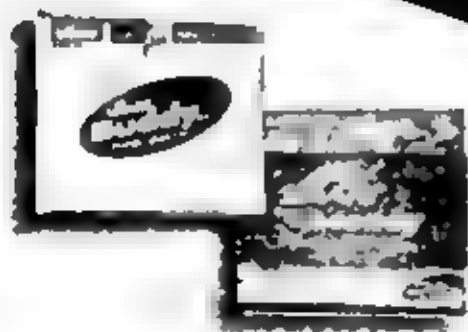
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American found dead in Manila Hotel

BY JEROME ANING

AN AMERICAN, whose flight to the United States was cancelled when the plane developed engine trouble, was found dead in his Manila Hotel room yesterday morning.

Thomas Sharp, 53, an employee of CSI Control Co. and a resident of Kansas City, Missouri, was found dead by his Filipino wife, Claudette, 21, police said.

SPO3 Ernesto Jose Jr. of the Western Police District homicide section said Sharp arrived in Manila on July 5 to fetch Claudette and their 7-month-old son Gale Thomas. Sharp even brought along his sons by his first wife Alexander, 10, and Michael, 12.

On Sunday, the family boarded Northwest Airlines Flight 1004 bound for the United States. But the plane reportedly developed engine trouble over Cagayan and had to return to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, police said.

Airline personnel took the family to the Manila Hotel where they would wait for their new flight schedule.

Man slain collecting P600-debt

BY JEROME ANING

DARIO Melendres was killed Sunday night when he tried to collect the P600 he lent to a fellow vendor in Tondo, Manila.

Melendres, 30, of 39 Mabuhay Street, Tondo, was stabbed several times and died on the way to the Gat Andres Bonifacio Memorial Medical Center, also in Tondo, about 12:30 a.m.

PO3 Joselito de Ocampo of the Western Police District homicide section said Melendres was on his way home when the suspect, identified only as Jaime, attacked him at the corner of Lakandula and Mabuhay streets about 9:30 p.m.

The suspect, who is at large, was described as about 20 years old, 5-foot-3, muscular, fair-complexioned, round-faced, and wearing a white shirt and shorts.

About 4 p.m. Sunday, Melendres confronted Jaime on Lakandula, and berated and beat him up for failing to return the P600 he borrowed on July 18, PO3 De Ocampo said. The suspect was supposed to invest the money in a *lugaw* (rice porridge) business.

Melendres expected Jaime to get even, so he took a different route in going home. But Jaime at it managed to track him down and, after a chase that ended on Lakandula, cornered him between a parked FX taxi and a jeepney.

McDonald's ordered to pay woman for 1998 accident

BY DONA Z. PAZZIBUGAN

AN ANTIPOLO trial court has ordered the local franchise holder of the international fast food chain McDonald's to pay a sister-in-law of former Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. P51,010 in damages for an accident that happened two years ago in the premises of one of its stores in Quezon City.

Judge Felix Cabañes said McGeorge Food Industries was responsible for the accident that befell Miguela Yusingco, who slipped and fell on the wet pathway in front of the McDonald's branch along Katipunan Avenue on June 19, 1998.

Yusingco, 65, the prefect of students of the Kooka School of Quezon City, reportedly sustained abrasions and contusions in the shoulder, pelvis and hip joints.

Cabañes said the fast-food chain was "negligent" because it did not put up any sign to warn its customers and pedestrians that the pathway was wet.

"The failure of (McDonald's) to provide the necessary warning is negligence on its part, which is actionable in law," the judge said in a three-page decision dated June 27. "No convincing evidence was shown to prove that (Yusingco) did not exercise care or caution, or that there was negligence on her part."

The court pointed out that Yusingco was just seeking reimbursement of her

medical expenses of P1,010, but McDonald's refused to settle.

Apart from the actual damages of P1,010, the court also awarded Yusingco P20,000 as lawyer's fees and P30,000 in moral damages.

"The court also believes that if only (McDonald's) did not ignore her (Yusingco's) demand for compensation for her injuries, (Yusingco) would not have been compelled to litigate this matter in court," the court said.

Yusingco said she was supposed to leave coffee at McDonald's Katipunan branch because it was just adjacent to her school.

Since the store was still closed she decided to return to the school, passing through the pedestrian's pathway which

was still wet.

She said she slipped and fell, landing on her buttocks. Due to her injuries, she was not able to attend several school activities and missed some important meetings, she said.

It was the second time that the same McDonald's Katipunan branch figured in a legal battle over injuries allegedly sustained by a customer while in the store.

In 1996, 5-year-old Carille Santiago was reportedly electrocuted at the store counter and suffered third-degree burns that deformed her right hand.

The girl's family sued for damages after McDonald's refused to pay.

The case is still pending before the Quezon City regional trial court.



TANTAY

Hot car pawned to TV director

BY AGNES E. DONATO

POLICE yesterday said they uncovered a big car theft syndicate with the arrest of a businessman who allegedly pawned a stolen Toyota Land Cruiser truck worth P2.5 million to television director Al Tantay in San Juan.

Supt. Antonio Aguilar, chief of the Eastern Police District criminal investigation, identified the suspect as Chung Kiong Ong, alias Francis Ong, of 10th Avenue in Caloocan City. Ong was arrested in his house on Calirag Street in Barangay Pinagbahatan, Pasig around 11 a.m. Sunday, police said.

Aguilar said his group is trying to determine to which group Ong belonged.

Investigators said Ong, referred by Tantay's childhood friend Jose Mari de Leon, pawned a brown Toyota Land Cruiser (WEL-321) to the TV director for P720,000 on July 6.

Ong showed Tantay documents to prove that he bought the car from a Ruperto Santos of Balete Drive, Quezon City for P2.5 million.

On July 16, De Leon called up Tantay and said Ong was willing to sell the vehicle for another P250,000 for Ong and P150,000 for De Leon as middle man.

Tantay, a former movie actor, said he would think it over. He immediately checked the vehicle's records with the PNP Traffic Management Group and the Land Transportation Office and learned that the vehicle was a hot car and that its original owner was a Fernando Bulaiao, of Pandacan, Manila.

The TMG told Tantay that the car's original license plate number was WMC-251 and that the car was stolen on M.H. del Pilar Street in Ermita, Manila on June 20.

Tantay said he reported his discovery to the EPD and cooperated in setting up the arrest of Ong, who was then waiting at his Pasig City house for Tantay's supposed payment of P250,000.

Ong is detained at the Pasig City police detention cell and is facing charges of car theft and falsification of public and private documents.

Manila . . .

(From page A17)

increase of P23 per month for an average household consuming 30 to 40 cubic meters.

MWCI, which services Metro Manila's east zone, and the Lopez-owned Maynilad Water Services Inc., which services the west zone, are allowed to ask for a basic water rate adjustment each year, especially in the wake of "extraordinary events," such as the peso depreciation.

This increase is known as extraordinary price adjustment or EPA.

The MWSS Regulatory Office, the government body overseeing the operations of the two water companies, will review the separate petitions filed by the Lopez's MWCI and the Ayala's MWCI in the next two weeks.

MWCI group director for regulatory affairs and planning Virgilio C. Rivera Jr. also cited the Umiray-Angat Transbasin Project (UATP) of the MWSS as another "extraordinary" event to justify their demand for an increase.

Rivera explained that the MWSS, through the UATP project, is supposed to install separate pipelines bordering the service areas of Maynilad and Manila Water.

"Since completion of the UATP has been delayed for a year, we have continued with what we call cross-bordering flows to avoid any major service disruptions to our customers, especially in the southern part of Manila," Rivera told the Inquirer.

But he said MWCI is also losing money because it had to sell water to Maynilad "at a minimum cost of P2 per cubic meter."

Rice smuggling in the Visayas

SENIOR Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, former chief executive officer of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) and Panfilo Lacson's favorite subordinate, used to protect rice smuggling in the Visayas.

Nobody at the Bureau of Customs dared touch illegal big rice shipments, according to my sources, without incurring the ire of Aquino. Customs sources say that actually Aquino was just a dummy protector of the rice smugglers. The real protectors were President's Erap's close relatives and mistresses.

But now, even without Aquino, rice smuggling continues in the Visayas. Who is now protecting the rice smugglers?

The biggest rice smugglers are the brothers Lim who own Lirio Enterprises. They reportedly own nine ships that go abroad, particularly Thailand, and bring in huge rice shipments without paying taxes. Rice coming from Thailand is considered premium rice.

The rice shipments are reportedly made to appear as coming from domestic sources. Domestic rice shipment is not subject to customs duties.

Lims' smuggled shipments are landed at the ports of Cebu, Bohol and Leyte.

Another alleged smuggler is known as Jenny whose broker, a certain Doray Morales, reportedly has a sister working in Malacanan.

Recently, her smuggled rice shipment was seized by the customs bureau. Morales' sister is allegedly pressuring customs officials to release the confiscated cargo.

Rice smugglers will do everything to protect their illegal cargoes now that Senior Supt. Aquino is already out. They deprive the government of millions of pesos in revenues.

There is a snappy side to the rice story.

Anthony Abad, the newly appointed administrator at the National Food Authority (NFA), is making huge savings for the government in the importation of rice meant for the masses.

Abad, a lawyer who used to be tariff commissioner at the World Trade Organization (WTO), buys "broken rice," the local equivalent of quality "C-4" rice, from Thailand at US\$145 per metric ton.

Last year, the NFA under another administrator, imported broken rice at US\$204 per metric ton.

That's US\$61 in savings per metric ton. Multiply that figure by the hundreds of thousands in metric tons in shipment and you get a staggering figure.

Why the big difference in price between the rice imported by the NFA under Abad and the previous administrator?

NFA sources say the imported rice was bought from a middleman, Manny Tan, who was allegedly a crony of President Erap. Abad buys the rice straight from the source.

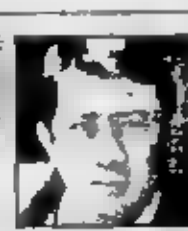
Talking about Erap, I don't pity the guy for his fate, although millions of our countrymen still sympathize with him.

If libel Erap sympathizers would read a secret file on him made by the Philippine National Police's Intelligence Command, their feelings toward him would change from pity to hatred.

I got hold of secret documents written on Feb. 17, 1998 by the Intelligence Command about Erap, long before the basher of Erap and Panfilo "Ping" Lacson became his head.

In fact, the secret documents were signed by Senior Supt. Arturo C. Lomibao, then the director of the PNP Intelligence Command. Lomibao, who was placed on a "freezer" (without any assignment) during the Erap administration.

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo



because of his report, his stance been promoted to chief superintendent (equivalent to the Army's brigadier general) and now holds the position of director of PNP Recon I.

The following was Lomibao's introduction to his detailed secret files on Erap:

"In Philippine politics, no one is more closely identified with the masses than Vice President Joseph 'Erap' Estrada. With his quintessential wristband (the symbol of 'kano' tough guy), 'one-with-the-people' pictures (the most popular of which is having lunch with a poor family with nothing but the poor man's fare of *arroz* and rice), Erap is undoubtedly identified to be the champion of the masses. At a superficial angle, Erap seems unassuming, almost tame, relative to his high-strung political rivals and contemporaries.

"However reports revealed otherwise. Investigation (by the Intelligence Command) disclosed a very dangerous facet of the Vice President of the Philippine Republic. One report to another reveals that Erap is not the 'Forest Gump' (a movie about a simpleton who became wealthy) he is perceived to be but a Machiavelli, albeit, a dangerous one, whom, if left catapulted to the Presidency, possesses the capability to crush the country.

"According to reliable reports, Erap is connected with almost all forms of big-time criminal activities in the country, ranging from big-time drug trafficking, human smuggling, illegal gambling, international high class prostitution, and a string of murder cases when he was Chairman of the Presidential Anti-Crime

Commission (PACC).

"If classified information gathered on PACC are (sic) true then it would make it into the vilest machinery of oppression since the Marcos regime. Documents unearthed revealed stories reeking of cold-blooded murder and violation of human rights performed by abusive officials of the PACC—all done to serve personal ends. In an evil attempt to portray a function Commission, PACC ranking personnel, headed by PACC's Task Force Habagat (headed by Lacson—RT) did not hesitate to frame up innocent victims just so they would come up with 'accomplishments' to be trumpeted by their cohorts in the media."

The report above was made before the May 1998 presidential elections.

Had it been made public, perhaps Erap would not have won the presidency and the country would have been spared the agony of his mismanagement. And publicist Salvador "Bobby" Dacer, his driver Emmanuel Corbino, and casino employee Edgar Bentalin, would still be alive. And, yes, Panfilo Lacson would not have become senator.

The details of Lomibao's secret files will come out in subsequent columns.

The Association of Firearms and Ammunition Dealers Association of the Philippines (AFAD) is sponsoring free training of policemen in basic gun handling and safety. Ammunition to be used in the training will be provided free by the association.

Most cops don't know how to shoot, worse, they accidentally shoot themselves and innocent people in pursuing criminals.

Teaching cops safe gun handling and shooting is AFAD's contribution to the country's peace and order, the association's press release said.

Cell phone firms . . .

(From page A17)

modeled packs over the counter, without having to fill out registration forms or submitting any requirements.

But Salama said pre-paid subscribers would also have an option to register, "so we can trace their stolen handsets more easily."

He said the memorandum of agreement for this option would probably materialize before the year ends.

The MOA was reached after the National Telecommunications Commission issued an order for cell phone service providers to block in their networks the IMEI of stolen handsets registered in the name of their subscribers.

Before this agreement, victims of cell phone theft could only ask the networks to block the use of their handsets. But these stolen cell phones could still be

used in another network.

With the MOA, the use of stolen cell phones would be blocked in the three networks.

From January to June this year alone, the Philippine National Police recorded 522 cases of cell phone snatching nationwide, with most of the thefts happening in Metro Manila. Some of the victims were also killed during the snatching.

Police have also identified at least 13 syndicates specializing in cell phone snatching, but have also reported the arrest of several suspects and the recovery of 288 stolen cell phones from thieves and fences during police operations nationwide.

With the MOA signed by the three service providers, the NTC expects to reduce the number of cell phone snatching cases in Metro Manila.

Metropolitan Manila Development

Authority (MMDA) Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. warned the public against using their cell phones while in a gasoline station or during a thunderstorm.

Abalos said studies conducted in the United States showed that wavelengths of cell phones could trigger explosions.

Abalos said he recently received a report that lightning struck an avid "texter" in Cabuyao, Laguna.

He said he would ask the local governments of Metro Manila to pass an ordinance prohibiting the use of cell phones in gasoline stations and in areas where flammable fumes are present.

The use of cellular phone while driving was earlier prohibited in Quezon City and Manila after local government officials noted that a number of vehicular accidents in their areas were due to the undisciplined use of cell phones.

With a report from Nelson F. Flores

'Someone he knew so . . .

Mantele said Hayashi was killed between 6 p.m. Sunday and shortly before the discovery of the body.

A neighbor told police he saw Hayashi receive a male guest about 6 p.m. Sunday. Another witness confirmed this and said he saw the same man come to Hayashi's house last week.

Both witnesses said they could identify the man if they saw him again.

Initial investigation showed none of Hayashi's belongings were missing, except for video cassette disc (VCD) player that was last seen in the master bedroom.

Since Hayashi had been living alone for the last five years, men regularly came to clean his house and do errands, Mantele learned from neighbors.

Japanese consul Shinichi Nara brought Hayashi's body to Camp Crame for autopsy yesterday afternoon. The remains are expected to be flown to Japan later.

Philippine National Police Director General Leandro Mendoza yes-

terday ordered a massive manhunt for Hayashi's killer.

Hayashi initially studied the piano in a music conservatory in Japan until he first saw a harp when he was 16. He first played classical tunes on the harp just like the other conservatory students, but he later shifted to pop and jazz music.

He started playing professionally when he was 21 and toured night spots in Japan. He first came to the Philippines in 1980 upon the invitation of Odyssey Record Bar owner Bambi Fonacier and Octo Arts International president Orly Iacac.

Hayashi did a show at the Ramada Hotel (now Manila Midtown). It was followed by a sellout concert at the Araneta Coliseum with pianist Boy Catindig.

Jazz lovers came to know Hayashi after the release of his version of Jobim's "Wave." But through the years, Hayashi played different types of music, from classical to Broadway and Original Pilipino Music (OPM).

"I would not have decided to

settle here if not for the hospitality of the Filipinos," Hayashi told the Inquirer in an interview. "Filipinos are very friendly. And I also love Tagalog songs. I like playing them."

In 1985, Hayashi decided to settle in the Philippines for good. His hit albums include the "Finger Trip" series, "Standing Room Only," "Best of Tadao Hayashi," "Christmas a la Tadao" and "Tadao's Christmas Wish."

Hayashi paid tribute to Filipino composers in three albums — "OPM Special," "Maraming Salamat, Tadao" and "Harping on Pop."

At the time of his death, Hayashi was playing regularly for the lunch crowd at Cibo Bar Restaurant at Dusit Hotel in Makati. He was also teaching private harp lessons.

"He was a very nice man," said Sandra Garcia, Dusit marketing director. "His set was only 45 minutes, but he would gladly do as many encores as he could, depending on the requests of the audience. He really loved entertaining."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, July 24, 2000
16th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:
Gospel:

Ex 14:21-15:1
Mt 12:46-50

While Jesus was still talking to the people, his mother and his brothers wanted to speak to him and they waited outside. So someone said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are just outside; they want to speak with you."

Jesus answered, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" Then he pointed to his disciples and said, "Look! Here are my mother and my brothers. Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is for me brother, sister, or mother."

Commentary

Evangelists frequently bring to the fore the fact that family ties can have a negative effect on the development of the human person in terms of faith and mission. Christians are invited to be detached from these bonds. Jesus himself sets an example. In today's reading the intention of the family is obviously to keep him back from his mission, symbolized by the fact that they are standing outside. Jesus' mission is however from the very beginning to do the will of the Father, and he expects the very same thing from his disciples. At stake is spiritual maturity. Jesus did not come to abolish the family but to bring it to perfection. Along these lines he redefines the family as a community of disciples.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the precious gift of the family. Grant that it may always be a place where we can grow in faith and love.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION—General rule: Prospective operation of the law; exception—In general, laws are to be construed as having only prospective operation. *Lex prospecta, non respicit*. Equality settled, only laws existing at the time of the execution of a contract are applicable thereto and not later statutes, unless the latter are specifically intended to have retroactive effect. A later law which enlarges, abridges, or in any manner changes the intent of the parties to the contract necessarily impairs the contract itself and cannot be given retroactive effect without violating the constitutional prohibition against impairment of contracts. But the foregoing principle do admit of certain exceptions. One involves police power. A law enacted in the exercise of police power to regulate or govern certain activities or transactions could be given retroactive effect and may reasonably impair vested rights or contracts. Police power legislation is applicable not only to future contracts, but equally to those already in existence. Nonimpairment of contracts or vested rights clauses will have to yield to the superior and legitimate exercise by the State of police power to promote the health, morals, peace, education, good order, safety and general welfare of the people. Moreover, statutes in exercise of valid police power must be read into every contract. [Citations omitted. Justice Quinsombing, Second Division, Ortigas and Co., Ltd. v. Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 126102, December 4, 2000]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

Scorpions concert cancelled

THE ONE NIGHT performance of Scorpions, Germany's most successful rock band, scheduled Aug. 1 at the Araneta Coliseum, has been cancelled.

In a brief statement, the organizers of the show explained that the circumstances and conditions beyond their control compelled the indefinite deferment of the Manila engagement of the popular heavy metal rock band.

All ticket buyers can claim their refunds only from Ticketnet at Araneta Coliseum from Aug. 1 to 15, 2 to 5 p.m.

For more details on ticket refunds, call 911-5555.

Barbie's Cradle at Padi's

AFTER the successful anniversary concert of South Border and the hit one-night performance of Side A Band, Padi's Mindave presents Barbie's Cradle in a special concert tonight.

Barbie's Cradle is led by 22-year-old vocalist Barbie Almalbis who wrote all the songs in the band's debut album under Warner Music Philippines.

Other band members are Wendel Garcia on vocals, drums and percussion; Rommel de la Cruz on vocals, bass and string arrangement.

Padi's Mindave will also present The Eraserheads on July 26, Ravenmaya on Aug. 1, Parokya 16 on Aug. 16 and Freestly on Aug. 22 and 27.

Join the "New Singing Star Search" competition at Padi's Mindave and the exciting "Battle of the Bands."

For inquiries, call 453-0080 or 414-4930.

New video releases

C-INTERACTIVE! Digital Entertainment releases original copies on videos of three exciting movies about bizarre love triangles.

"Double Cross" is an erotic thriller starring Patrick Bergin, Jennifer Tilly and Kelly Preston.

"Dangerous Indiscretion" weaves the sexual lifestyle of the rich and famous, with C Thomas Howell, Malcolm McDowell and John Severance.

"Immortal Sins" takes love into a supernatural high. Stars Cliff de Young, Maryam D'Abo and Shari Shattuck.

For inquiries, call 245-5011 to 12.

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Boob-tube boobos

THANKS to all the people we meet who tell us that they enjoy reading this column, and make particular mention of the boost they get from our Boob-tube Boobos. This encourages us to keep listening for those humorous boner on the tube. Our latest "harvest":

Quiz Show Host: Where are Ivy League universities located? UK? USA? Canada? Or Switzerland? Contestant: Teacherland? Contestant: Teacherland! (Ay, doble mali!)

Quiz Show Host: What is the most famous tourist spot in

Pangasinan? Contestant: The Rizal Monument! (You really don't have the foggiest notion, do you?)

Host: Our guest cook will now show us the proper way to grill vegetables, so they aren't burned to a crisp. What's the secret, chef? Guest Cook: To grill vegetables, don't too much, too hot, too near, coming black! (It's like listening to Tarzan!)

Host: Can you show us around your beautiful home? Star: Gladly. Ito ang aking din-

VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

ing room, kasi dito ako kumakain!

Host: Why did you fall for (name of male star)? Female starlet: Pogi kasi, e. Host: Sa lahat ng mga facial fea-

tures niya, among pinaka-turn-on sa 'yo? Female starlet: Pinakagusto ko? - Yung kanyang mga ilong! (Ay, mga ilong!)

Host: In today's show, we will have famous designers advising our celebrity guests on what to wear for different important occasions where they should look their best. Right, (name of designer)? Designer: Well, I'll try

Host: Good! For example, here's our beautiful starlet. Can you take a look at her, and tell us what would be the best gown for her if she's go-

ing to attend a movie awards ceremony?

Designer: Well, since she's a movie personality, ang bagay na gown sa kanya talaga, yung fully sequence!

(Ay, sequence!)

Quiz Show Host: Our next question is on Literature. How well do you know playwrights?

Contestant: Uh, playwrights? Quiz Show Host: For example, Ben Jonson called William Shakespeare as the "Sweet of Avon."

Fill in the blank: he was referring

to an animal. What animal did he say William Shakespeare was like? Contestant: Ah, Koala bear? ("William Shakespeare, the Sweet Koala Bear of Avon?" — I don't think so!!)

'Kakaibang Pop'

KATHA, the organization of Filipino composers, presents "Kakaibang Pop: A Different Taste of Contemporary Pinoy Music" at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, July 27 at the Music Museum in Greenhills, San Juan. Featured artists include Grace Nono, Noel Cabangon and Cynthia Alexander. Tickets are available at Alexander World outlets and the Katha office. Call 433-4107

Aiza Seguerra's time has come, again

BY REMY M. UMERIZ

AIZA Seguerra, the former wonder child star of "Eat Bulaga," is a big star again. Bow.

Less than three months after the release of her Vicor debut album, "Pagdating ng Panahon" the album has been certified quadruple platinum by the Philippine Association of Record Industry (Pari).

Translated into figures, "Pagdating" has sold more than 120,000 copies both in CDs and cassettes. In the local music industry, this is considered phenomenal.

Who would ever think that Aiza would reinvent herself as a singer?

"It was totally unexpected," said Maria Gloria Ocampo-Mozo (MG), Vicor vice president for product and promotions who has been in the recording business for more than a decade. "We know we had a good song, but the response of the public is overwhelming."

MG is humble enough to share the credit for Aiza's album with the various people involved in its

conceptualization.

It all began with a phone call from record producer Margot Gallardo.

"Her friend Armi Arayo from All Media Marketing House wanted Aiza to record only two songs which she could present to prospective clients for commercial purposes," MG recalled. "She invited me to watch Aiza perform at JoeKher's (in Cubao) and see if Vicor would be interested in producing the album themselves. Margot thought a direct tie with a recording outfit had more advantages."

"Together with Merle Mercado of the ad and promotions department, we joined Margot, her sister Edith and Armi in watching Aiza. When we arrived (at JoeKher's), someone was singing but I did not know it was Aiza. I thought the voice was pretty good. After her performance, I was fully convinced she deserved a break in recording."

That same night MG discovered why Armi was bent on giving Aiza a singing career. For one, Armi believes Aiza has musical talent, having recorded three albums for Al-

pha when she was still a child. Her voice, though, was unpolished then, and her heart was with television, not singing.

Aiza's mother, Aling Caring, urged her daughter to study music at the University of the Philippines and later at the University of St. Tomas. Aiza also took up guitar lessons.

When Armi felt Aiza was ready, feelers were sent to some recording outfits, but there were no takers. Incidentally, in Viva's compilation album "Mother of All," Aiza is featured in two cuts but no one seemed to have noticed them.

MG proposed the project to Vicor president John Tan. When Tan gave the go-signal, the brainstorming began.

"When we heard 'Pagdating ng Panahon' we knew we had found the right song which we could release as the carrier single of the album," MG said. "It was a unanimous decision. It is the only original song in Tagalog in the album. All the rest were in English and a few revivals."

"Pagdating" is tailor-fit for Aiza,

who is only 17. It expresses what teenagers dream of and hope for. A few revisions had to be made, though. I instructed (composer) Edith Gallardo to convert it into a love song so it could have a wider appeal. The laid-back music of Moy Ortiz (of The Company) matches the lyrics well. We had no doubt we had found a winning combination."

MG also wanted to include a song about God, and that song is "I See You Lord." Edith wrote the song in 1998 and did not throw it away. MG was convinced that Aiza could turn it into a hit.

Aiza herself wanted to include a song dedicated to her parents and she found it in "Sorry," which also talks about how much she loves her parents.

The album took almost a year to finish because Aiza is a full-load student at UST and is only free for recordings during weekends. She could not go work in the recording studio beyond midnight since she had morning classes.

MG is amazed at how Aiza has been cooperating in promoting



PHENOMENAL AGAIN: The response to Aiza's music has been overwhelming, says Vicor VP MG Mozo.

her album

"Pagdating ng Panahon" has taken the industry by storm. It has revived interest in Aiza. Now almost every TV producer in town wants to feature her on their show

A second Aiza Seguerra album

is being prepared. "Pagdating" the album, meanwhile, could be on its way to becoming a five-time platinum before year-end.

On Aug. 4, Aiza performs in a solo concert at the Music Museum. Aiza's time has arrived. Again.

'ALONG CAME A SPIDER'

Caught in a web of few surprises and dearth of motives

BY RUBEN M. CRUZ JR.

JAMES Patterson's novels may not be Pulitzer Prize material, but as escapist entertainment they're right on the money. Sadly, none of the two

REVIEW

film translations of his books, "Kiss the Girls" and the recent "Along Came a Spider," have approximated the excitement that his thrillers bring to readers.

For a film categorized as a suspense-thriller, "Spider" has to work doubly hard just to keep the attention of the audience. It opens quite promisingly with a short but gripping prologue involving Patterson's hero, detective and psycho doctor Alex Cross, in a serial-killer bust that claims his partner's life and consequently drives him into a self-imposed exile.

The scene, though blotted by phony digital effects, is a grabber and is executed precisely like the suspenseful opening of a Patterson novel. It sets an engaging tone, which unfortunately the film is never able to sustain.

I've read all of Patterson's books, including his latest, "Pop Goes the Weasel," which I heard is up next for film adaptation. "Spider" is actually his first book but Paramount for some reason chose to make "Kiss the Girls" before it. Not that it matters, because one can get a good sense of Alex Cross' world of psycho killers whether one sees only the sequel or the prequel.

But I would say "Kiss the Girls" is better because its screenplay adaptation stuck closer to Patterson's original story, while

"Spider," though retaining the characters and the broad storyline of the book, circumvented some of the book's elements. Perhaps the convoluted plot structure of the original would have been too difficult to translate into film, especially one that only runs for an hour and a half.

Preposterous, illogical

The result is a suspense-thriller that has lost much of its "Patterson-ness."

The abbreviations employed by writer Michael Moss diluted the credibility of the characters, most especially the villains, and the condensed storytelling made the film's few surprises seem as if they were pulled out of a hat. They are preposterous and illogical because of the dearth of relevant information, like motives, for instance.

In his books, Patterson does create some of the most imaginative twists but he relates them in a way that always appears plausible. Some-

how he always seems to be able to untangle and synchronize the mesh of plot threads in the end, which this hybrid of his book cannot.

Moss writes a plodding screenplay that gets too easily bogged down in the details, thereby ignoring the fact that there's supposed to be tense anticipation flowing throughout the whole film. After the action-packed kidnapping of a senator's daughter—the center of the film's plot—the thrills come in trickles.

Saving grace

The film, though, makes one deviation from Patterson that be-

comes its saving grace, in fact the saving grace of the entire franchise of films that have been and would be based on Patterson's novels. The adaptations fashion the character of Alex Cross after Morgan Freeman.

In the Patterson novels, Cross is much younger, good looking and sexier. He's a babe magnet, a brainy version of Shaft. If you would think of an actor who'd suit him, the likes of Denzel Washington would immediately come to mind.

But I like the firm version of Cross better. I must say that ever since Freeman first appeared as Alex Cross

in "Kiss the Girls," I've been reading the Patterson novels with his voice in my mind.

Freeman exudes such a powerful and intimate presence on screen. His elderly Alex Cross is a guru wrestling with inner demons, a struggle that he never lets affect his proficiency or his calm demeanor.

When Freeman's Cross speaks, he speaks with a benevolence and sensitivity that makes even seemingly banal lines profound and penetrating. When he says, "Forgiving yourself is the one thing a person cannot do," you remember. The script doesn't

allow a deeper characterization for Cross but leaves it up to Freeman to help the audience read between the lines.

Fairly entertaining

Aside from Freeman, the polished look and feel of "Spider" makes it fairly entertaining. The musical scoring of Jerry Goldsmith helps inject some tension during long stretches when nothing significant seems to be happening.

Director Lee Tamahori ("Moulin Rouge," "Once

Were Wamors") and cinematographer Matthew Leonetti swathe the film with a dark, gloomy quality that's perfect for the genre.

Michael Wincott and Meka Boorem also deliver noteworthy performances while the rest of the cast seem to be drifting in limbo, though that's not entirely their fault. Wincott plays Gary Sonji, the twisted and ambitious kidnapper who deliberately involves Cross in the police investigation of his crime because he wants the whole

world to know how good he is. This guy was born with a face typecast for villainy and he uses this asset quite well.

Boorem was last seen as one of Mel Gibson's daughters in "The Patriot." Here she plays the kidnapping victim, Megan Rose (there were actually two kidnapping victims in the original story). The always cute but always listless Monica Potter plays one of her Secret Service details who wants to help Cross to atone for her failure to protect her

principal or VIP (In the book, her character becomes a love interest for Cross).

Though she's given enough screen time, Potter gives another forgettable performance. Maybe having spent some time with Freeman on the set would help her become a better actor in her next film.

"Spider" is not the most exciting suspense story that its billing claims it is, but it's not trash, or her. It's not a must-see, but it's also not unwatchable.

POWER PLANT Rockwell Center, Makati City Tel. No. 886-448-41		
ATLANTIS GP 11:15, 1:15, 3:15, 5:15, 7:15, 9:15	ALONG CAME A SPIDER P 13 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	DR. DOOLITTLE 2 GP 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
FINAL FANTASY - P 13 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 7:30, 9:30	TOM CATS - R 11 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	THE LAST MAN STANDING 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30

MATINEE P40.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

MITRCS R Restricted No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted

ASIAN DRAGON UNLEASHED ONCE MORE

JET LI, top Asian box-office superstar, teams-up with producer Luc Besson (director of "The Fifth Element") and action choreographer Cory Yuen in an exciting slick, action thriller loaded with ferocious two-fisted, fleet-footed fight scenes that rank with the classic street fighting of Bruce Lee's "Enter the Dragon" and Jet Li's own "Fist of Legend".

In an original story by Jet Li himself, he plays Liu Jiu'an, a Chinese police officer trapped in a deadly conspiracy while on an assignment in Paris, who comes to the aid of Jessica (Bridget Fonda), an American forced into prostitution by a villainous cop.

Kiss fear goodbye. Witness the skill, the speed and the power of Jet Li in KISS OF THE DRAGON.

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OPENS JULY 23

MTCS Rating: Parental Guidance Suggested

7th Sexy Date Movie DAY!

Introducing, the "Tomcats," tropa ng troa-wheeling, sex-obsessed guys, na walang matupag kung hindi maka-iskor at magbiang ng nobya.

Nagpustahan ang barkada - sino ang huling barako na di patatali sa pag-aasawa?

Metapos ang ilang taon, sina Michael (Jerry O'Connell) ng JERRY MAGUIRE at Kyle (Jake Busey) ang STARSHIP TROOPERS na lang ang natitirang bachelor sa grupo.

Upang manalo sa pusta, ise-set up ni Mike si Kyle with super-sective Natalie (Shannon Elizabeth) ng SCARY MOVIE, AMERICAN PIE! Ngunit di niya inaasahan na mainitab din pala siya sa sexing dalaga. Manalo man siya sa pusta, maglalabo naman ang true love niya!

Silipin din sa hilarous sexy comedy from Columbia Pictures sina Playboy playmates Julia Schwartz at Amber Smith. Rated R.

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ CORNE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor

[illegible]

Local bourse readies listing of P8B in privatization bonds

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE LISTING of the national government's P8 billion worth of progress or privatization bonds on the fixed income board of the Philippine Stock Exchange will finally push through next month or in early September.

Roberto Juanechito Dispo, senior vice president of issue underwriter First Metro Investment Corp., told reporters that certain technical kinks were still being ironed out to jumpstart the trading of these fixed income instruments. However, he said these bonds would be ready for listing "by latter August or early September."

The so-called progress bonds are five-year bonds issued by the national government in August last year with a coupon rate of 13.875 percent a year payable quarterly. The bondholders are given the option to exchange the bonds for shares or cash equivalent of government corporations undergoing privatization.

The listing of these bonds is part of the PSE's efforts to offer more fixed income instruments to investors following the weak sentiment in the

market.

This will be the second batch of fixed-income instruments to be traded on the PSE's fledgling fixed income board. Some P30.35 billion worth of small-denominated treasury bonds maturing in 2004 were listed on the PSE in July last year. These fixed income instruments, however, are still not actively traded in the stock market at present.

Dispo said that the next batch of fixed income instruments to be listed on the PSE should generate better interest because a system of segregation of retail and wholesale trading would be implemented.

"We explained to (PSE president) Mr. (Ramon) Garcia that the very important factor needed to enliven the trade transactions is the proper dichotomization of the trading volume," Dispo said.

"For example, in the progress bond issue, P10 million below will be traded by the brokers while transactions above P10 million will be traded by the government securities dealers. Remember that (these dealers) are into wholesale trading," he said.

Dispo said that as the underwriter, FMIC would encourage the holders of the progress bonds to go to the PSE's fixed income board and

trade these instruments.

Meanwhile, Dispo said that what had delayed the listing of the progress bonds was some technical discussion on which system to use. While the PSE has agreed to upgrade its Mactrade system, he said Telerate has also offered to put in place a system for the trading of these bonds.

The earlier target was to list these bonds on the fixed income board of the local bourse last June 22.

FMIC president Francisco Sebastian said: "Hopefully, the progress bonds will provide additional volume to the market. While you are waiting for an upside, you are earning money."

To encourage further activity in fixed-income trading, the PSE is now working on a system to accredit all of its member-brokerage houses to trade fixed-income instruments. Before, there were only six brokers accredited to offer such instruments to retail clients.

FMIC believes that this new instrument is exciting because it is a hybrid government securities instrument convertible to equity stakes on state assets up for privatization.

"The innovative convertibility feature of these instrument makes it ideal for PSE listing as it is cross-linked to equities," First Metro told the PSE in its proposal for the listing.

MOUNTING LOSSES

Mariwasa closes Pasig plant

MARIWASA Manufacturing Inc. of the Coseteng family, one of the country's biggest ceramic and tile manufacturers, yesterday announced its decision to shut down its manufacturing operations in Pasig due to continuing losses.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Mariwasa spokesperson Aurora Jinawath said the company's board of directors approved on Friday a motion to permanently close down its main factory.

"The board directed the management to serve the proper notices on all parties concerned and to observe the proper procedures mandated by law as regards the separation of employment of employees affected by the decision," Jinawath said.

Mariwasa was incorporated in 1963 and is principally engaged in the manufacture of glazed ceramic floor and water tiles. It claims more than half of the market for these products. It earlier undertook a financial restructuring to be able to tap offshore markets.

Analysts said that with the closure of the main Pasig plant, Mariwasa would likely become simply a holding company. Another possibility, an analyst said, would be to transform itself into a trading company which could, for instance, sim-

ply import products from the Cosetengs' Thai partner, Siam Cement Public Co. Ltd., which has a 39-percent stake in the company.

Since 1998, Mariwasa has been seeking to raise additional equity and reduce its debt. Among the cost-cutting measures implemented by the company was the reduction of inventory level to avoid inventory buildup and reduce liabilities. A few years before the closure of the Pasig factory, it had offered an early retirement program for regular employees.

DISCLOSURES

THE LISTING OF 2,388,996 common shares of RFM Corp. is set for today.

ACESITE (Philippines) Hotel Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 15 at 4 p.m. at the Nautilus I of the Holiday Inn Manila, Ermita, Manila. Record date is set on June 30.

WISE Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 30 at 9 a.m. at the Boardroom, 16/F Tower I, The Enterprise Center, Makati. Record date is set on June 18.

THE BOARD OF

Mariwasa Manufacturing Inc. approved the motion to permanently stop the manufacturing operations of its plant located at Ortigas Ave. Extension, Bo. Rosario, Pasig City, due to continued losses.

Elected directors of A Brown Co. Inc. were Walter Brown, Annabelle Brown, Victor Juat, Patricia Anne Juat, Josefine Anita King, Guido Alfredo Delgado, Johnny Hernandez, Gerardo Lanuza Jr., Amador Bacani, Roberto Pizarro and Emmanuel Bautista.

ALASKA Milk Corp. on July 20 purchased 300,000 of its shares at P2.02 per share and 20,000 shares at P2.06 per share for the company's stock buy back program.

Elected directors of United Paragon Mining Corp. were Alfredo Ramos, Eduardo Castillo, Carlos Dominguez, Maximo Licaucio III, Ricardo Miguel Ramos, Manuel Recto and Augusto Sunico.

Elected directors of MacroAsia Corp. were Washington Sy, Mariano Tanengil, Lucio Tan Jr., Joseph Chua, Jaime Bautista, George Sy, Wes Ah Koe, Hans Sy and Peter Pavila.

PURE Foods Corp. disclosed the resignation of Ma. Belen C. Buendias as director and elected as new one was Delfin L. Lazaro. Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research

Philippine Stock Exchange

STOCKS	(As of Monday, July 23, 2001)	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.5	4.8	4.8	4.8	20,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	68	69.5	68	68	207,800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	36	36	36	36	111,000
First E-Bank Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	206	207	203	206	80,800
Philippine National Bank	40	40	40	40	18,000
Phil. Savings Bank	30	30	30	30	10,000
Rizal Comm'l Bkg Corp. A	18	18	18	18	500
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.5	26	24.5	26	4,200
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Philippine Fund Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	40,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	215	215	215	215	300
Manulife Financial Corp.	1425	1430	1425	1430	5,720
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	10,000
Sun Life Financial Serv	1250	1260	1250	1260	2,280
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Abs-Cbn Broadcasting Corp.	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	2,100
Diversified Fin. Network	6.8	7.1	6.8	7.1	3,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	180,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	680	680	680	680	530
Liberty Telecom Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	54,800,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.7	16,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	30,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	665	665	660	665	18,270
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	120,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.033	0.034	0.033	0.034	20,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	5,100
Meralco Electric Co. B	48.6	49	48	48.5	528,700
Palayan Corp.	1.98	2	1.98	2	442,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	20,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.2	2.24	2.2	2.2	833,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	10,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	4,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.18	1.2	1.18	1.2	5,061,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.08	2.08	2.02	2.02	1,072,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.7	4.85	4.7	4.75	565,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	18.75	19	18.5	18.75	1,154,300
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	16,000
RFM Corp.	2.38	2.38	2.26	2.29	3,039,000
San Miguel Corp. A	43	43	42.5	43	878,400
San Miguel Corp. B	54	55.5	54	55.5	1,228,400
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	8,312,000
Abotiz Equity Ventures	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	241,000
Ajo, Net Holdings Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.28	1.28	1,318,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0076	0.0095	0.0075	0.0085	875,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2	2	2	2	4,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	200
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.84	1.94	1.88	1.88	3,883,000
Firstvest Dev. Corp.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	110,000
Phil Phil Hilda Corp.	32	32.5	31.5	32	365,400
Global Equities Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	20,000
Guroco Holdings (Phil.)	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	11.25	11.25	10.75	10.75	14,800
Macro Asia Corp.	2.02	2.02	1.98	1.98	170,000
Macro Asia Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	22,000
Macro Holdings	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	30,000
Macro Asia Corp.	0.71	0.72	0.7	0.72	2,880,000
Macro Pacific Corp.	0.45	0.48	0.45	0.48	300,000
Philinvest Holdings Corp.	8	8	8	8	1,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	400,000
Tanday Holdings Inc.	8	8	8	8	20,000
Univide Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.27	0.26	0.27	30,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Coro-Cost Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	10,000
Musik Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.8	1.8	54,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	150,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15	15	15	15	5,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	860,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.5	530,000
Lalor & Resorts Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	14,000,000
Manila Jockey Club	18	18	18	18	3,857,000
Philippine Racing Club	5	5.1	5	5.1	15,410,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Abs-Cbn Hlds Corp (Pdr)	39.5	39.5	39	39	1,400
Jollibee Warrants	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.5	805,700
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	2,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc. Warrants	0.02	0.02	0.018	0.019	32,200,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.9	4.95	4.85	4.85	3,090,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	100,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	320,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	350,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	350,000
Firstvest Land Inc.	2.02	2.08	2.02	2.02	1,768,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	2,500,000
SM Development Corp.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	40,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	27,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	5,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	10,000,000
Itogon-Suyo Mines A	0.05	0.055	0.05	0.055	58,500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	870,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0042	0.004	0.004	27,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev'l Corp.	0.022	0.023	0.022	0.022	10,800,000
Philinvest Mining Corp. A	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	160,000
Philinvest Mining Corp. B	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.5	360,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	8,200,000
Imperial Res.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	2,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	17,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	100,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
SHARES					
Banks & Fin Svcs	523,610				49,147,700.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,051,373,390				437,815,180.00
Mineral	17,198,000				25,067,520.00
Mining	110,670,000				3,838,150.00
OIL					329,500.00
GRAND TOTALS	1,203,235,000				516,464,250.00
AVERAGES					
Banks & Fin Svcs	552.85				DOWN 2.98
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,950.83				UP 3.07
PRO	517.79				DOWN 1.14
Mining	1,446.14				UP 5.08
OIL	1.75				DOWN 0.01
All Shares Index	792.73				DOWN 2.94
Composite	1,374.83				DOWN 1.53
NO OF ADVANCES: 27 NO OF DECLINES: 29 NO OF UNCHANGED: 48; NO OF TRADED ISSUES: 104; NO OF TRADES: 2,044					

CURRENCIES

July 23, 2001	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in J\$S	Foreign currency in Pesos
Japan	Dollar	1,148.78	1 000.000	83.2100
United Kingdom	Pound	1 640.58	1 430.800	78.1222
Hong Kong	Dollar	1 470.38	1 282.15	8.8223
Switzerland	Franc	0.654.05	0.579.10	30.8484
Singapore	Dollar	0.743.06	0.648.42	34.5028
Bahrain	Dinar	0.8289.2	0.5484.28	29.1817
Bahrein	Dinar	0.579.127	0.504899	28.8710
Brunei	Dollar	0.3042.02	0.262.81	14.1481
Rupiah	Rupiah	0.0057.94	0.2886.62	14.1888
Rupiah	Rupiah		0.5482.98	29.0870
Thailand	Bart	0.000.103	0.000.090	0.0048
JAE	Dirham	0.0250.50	0.021 844	1.1823
Korea	Won	0.3123.08	0.2723.31	14.4807
Euro	Euro	0.000.885	0.000.772	0.0414
Germany	Mark	1.000.000	0.872.000	
France	Franc	0.511.292	0.448.847	23.7238
Netherlands	Guilder	0.152.450	0.132.838	7.0736
Austria	Schilling	0.453.780	0.398.896	21.0650
Belgium	Franc	0.072.673	0.083.371	3.3720
Italy	Lira	0.024.788	0.021 616	1.1802
Finland	Markka	0.000.618	0.000.460	
Portugal	Escudo	0.188.188	0.148.880	7.6038
Spain	Peseta	0.004.989	0.004.36	0.2318
Luxembourg	Franc	0.005.010	0.005.241	0.2789
Ireland	Punt	0.024.788	0.021.618	1.1802
		1.288.739	1 107.212	58.9141

*Security seal turns from black to blue

US dollar is not too strong—Treasury chief

WASHINGTON—US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill said Sunday the dollar was not too strong at its current levels, as a strong dollar continued to be of benefit to the US economy.

"No," O'Neill replied when asked by an interviewer on Fox News Sunday whether the dollar was too strong. "I believe a strong dollar is in the interests of the United States."

O'Neill had laughed at the question—a query that had almost become a ritual in his encounters with reporters.

He had already said he would rent New York's Yankee stadium and a brass band as a suitable venue for any announcement of a change in US exchange-rate policy, he jokingly reminded the Fox interviewer.

"Until then, anything anyone might say notwithstanding, we're not going to change the strong dollar policy," he said.

O'Neill said he believed the US economy had turned the corner—in apparent contradiction with the more pessimistic comments from Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan earlier this week.

The US economy could be set to bounce back to a 3-percent annual gross domestic product growth by next year, O'Neill said.

"We're going to see a return to a better rate of real growth in the fourth quarter and into next year."

Most of us are looking for something over 3-percent real growth in 2002."

Greenspan on Wednesday said the US economy was slowly emerging from a period of "sub-par" performance, but that "uncertainties surrounding the current economic situation are considerable, and the risks would seem to remain mostly tilted toward weakness in the economy."

The foreign-exchange markets were kept on edge by a comment from US President George W. Bush on Thursday, which he reiterated Sunday, about the level of the dollar.

"The best way to determine the price of the dollar is to let the market determine that price," Bush said Thursday.

Presidential comments on the level of the greenback have become a rarity since the time of Bush's predecessor, Bill Clinton, who opted to avoid remarks likely to influence the foreign exchange markets.

These markets now parse with close attention any remarks made by members of the Bush administration, as the US manufacturing sector increasingly argues that dollar strength is putting a drag on exports.

The strong dollar has also been linked by some commentators to Argentina's current financial woes, on the grounds that with the Argentine peso pegged to the dollar, exporters there are also finding their products overpriced for many markets.



PEOPLE wait at the counter in a McDonald's in Tokyo. The arrival of McDonald's in Japan helped change the eating habits of a nation, wooing rice lovers to burgers and fries, making fast-food a part of everyday life and marking the birth of a business empire. Thirty years later, McDonald's Co. Japan is becoming a publicly listed company, a first among the McDonald's outside the United States, making its initial public offering next Thursday on the Nasdaq market for ventures.

Japan's June trade surplus falls

TOKYO—Japan's trade surplus with the world fell 36.1 percent in June from a year ago for the fifth straight month of year-on-year decline, the government said Monday.

The merchandise trade surplus—the measure of all goods exported minus those imported—came in at 761.7 billion yen (\$6.19 billion), the Finance Ministry said.

The June surplus was larger than expected. Economists surveyed by Dow Jones Newswires had estimated that Japan would report a surplus of 739.4 billion yen (\$6.01 billion).

Also, the ministry announced that Japan's trade surplus for the first six months of 2001 fell 44 percent on year to 3.20 trillion yen (\$25.9 billion).

Exports in the January-June period fell 0.1 percent on year to 25.03 trillion yen (\$203 billion) while imports grew 12.8 percent to 21.83 trillion yen (\$177 billion).

The trade surplus with the United States fell 6.1 percent to 3.46 trillion yen (\$28.1 billion) in the period.

June's surplus followed declines of 86.1 percent in May, 41.6 percent in April, 17 percent in March and 25.4 in February. In January, Japan posted a merchandise trade deficit for the first time in four years.

The United States and other trading partners have long urged Japan to cut its surplus by stimulating domestic demand for imports. But consumer spending here has remained sluggish amid high unemployment aggravated by corporate restructuring and a prolonged economic slump.

Japan's at times politically sensitive surplus with the United States also fell, declining 8.3 percent in June on year to \$86.1 billion yen (\$4.77 billion), the ministry said. For the first six months of this year, it declined 6.1 percent to 3.46 trillion yen (\$28.1 billion).

McDonald's Japan goes public

TOKYO—The arrival of McDonald's in Japan helped change the eating habits of a nation—wooing rice-lovers to burgers and fries, making fast food a part of everyday life and marking the birth of a business empire.

Thirty years later, McDonald's Co. Japan is becoming a publicly listed company—a first among the McDonald's operations outside the United States—making its initial public offering Thursday on the Nasdaq market for ventures.

At a price of 4,300 yen (\$35) per share for 26.2 million shares, the IPO is expected to earn about 30

billion yen (\$405 million) and promises to be one of the hottest in Japan this year.

Going public is part of McDonald's move to grow even bigger and raise its corporate profile even higher in Japan.

McDonald's—rendered "Ma-ku" in Japanese shorthand—is believed to control about 65 percent of the fast-food burger market here, racking up 430 billion yen (\$3.5 billion) in sales and serving 1.3 billion customers a year. That works out to every Japanese visiting a Golden Arches an average of 10 times a year.

G8 leaders say rioters drown out help for poor

GENOA, Italy—World leaders wrapped up a summit here complaining their achievements for the poor were drowned out by riots, in which a demonstrator was shot dead.

The Group of Eight powers say violence has overshadowed their launch of a \$1.3-billion global fund to fight AIDS and a commitment to help lift Africa out of poverty.

"For the first time, we have actually got a positive, definitive process and plan for dealing with the problems of Africa, and yet if you measure the amount of coverage for protests and Africa, it would have been a ratio of 10 to one in favor of the riots," British Prime Minister Tony Blair said.

"The world has gone mad when that is the case."

The leaders conceded their summits were oversized.

"It has become a very, very big thing. It is getting out of control," said Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien, who was to host next year's G8 summit from June 26 to 28 in the Rocky Mountain resort of Kananaskis in the

Canadian province of Alberta.

G8 delegations, now numbering up to 900 people, would be slashed to a maximum of 35 each, he said. "If you want to come, bring a sleeping bag."

But the leaders refused to abandon future summit meetings in the face of violence.

"I am sorry there were some people hurt, but we have to meet," said a determined Chretien.

"We are discussing some very serious problems, he said at the end of the three-day meeting here, where streets littered with smashed glass are dotted with looted stores.

"If the anarchists want to destroy democracy, we will not let them succeed," Chretien added. "We have to meet and we are going to meet."

In a strident answer to protesters' criticisms, the G8 leaders issued a final communiqué in defense of globalization after the biggest demonstrations mounted since violent protests erupted in Seattle in December 1999.

Gloomy view highlights Fed debate

WASHINGTON—As Wall Street analysts listened to Alan Greenspan's surprisingly upbeat testimony on the US economy last week, a telling moment came when a lawmaker asked him to pinpoint the timing of a recovery.

The Federal Reserve chief hesitated, then said reluctantly, "If I have to make a forecast toward the end of this year, we will see things improving and clearly so next year."

Fed watchers said the chair's reticence underscored a difference of opinion within the marbled walls of the central bank. Greenspan was more worried than many of his colleagues that economic events could worsen before they get better.

"The crucial question is: How much economic stimulus do we have in the pipeline?" said economist Jan Hatzius of Goldman Sachs in New York.

SYMPOSIUM AGENDA

- 7:00 am Registration
- 8:00 am Welcome Remarks
Arcy Canumay, Interim-President, PhilWAPP
- 8:15 am Winning in the Wireless Revolution
How wireless technology will change the way we live and work
Peter S. Cohan
- 9:15 am I demo "i-mode"
A guided tour of the world's most successful wireless strategy
Takeshi Natsuno, Executive Director, Gateway Business Dept., NTT DoCoMo
- 10:15 am BREAK
- 10:45 am Panel Discussion: The Wireless Pinoy
How the Filipino has embraced wireless technology and the impact this will have in the country's future
Moderator: Michael Alan Hamlin
Panelists to speak on:
- the Globe experience
- the sociology of "texting" and its implications on the country
- 11:45 am Close of Plenary
- 2:00 pm BUSINESS TRACK
- Wireless Portals, Gaming and Entertainment (Ericsson)
- Wireless Marketing (Globe Telecom)
- Wireless Financial Services (Globe Telecom)
- Wireless CRM (Globe Telecom)
- Wireless Enterprise Resource Management (IBM)
- Wireless PDA Applications (MapInfo)
- Wireless Data Mining (Nokia)
TECH TRACK
- WAP: Today and Future (Nokia)
- GPRS/2.5G AND 3G infrastructure (Globe Telecom)
- SMS, EMS and MMS (Ericsson)
- Wireless Java/J2ME (Sun)
- XML in Wireless Application/Web to WAP (IBM)
- Wireless location-based services (Nokia)
- Bluetooth (Ericsson)
- 6:30 pm Closing Session and Raffle

- Special Sessions at the P2P Rooms (on-going):
(Prospects to Partnerships)
Scheduled talks from key companies for interested wireless application and technology developers on how to make a profit in the wireless business.
- 1:00 pm Nokia
- 1:30 pm Globe Telecom
- 2:00 pm IBM
- 2:30 pm Ericsson
- 3:00 pm Wireless Services Asia
- 3:30 pm IdeaFarm
- 4:00 pm Globe Telecom
- 4:30 pm Sun Microsystems

Special Sessions at the P2P Rooms (on-going):
(Prospects to Partnerships)
Scheduled talks from key companies for interested wireless application and technology developers on how to make a profit in the wireless business.



Beyond WAPPcceleration will help Filipino businesses to jumpstart efforts to take advantage of the wireless revolution. The symposium will explore the strategic and technical factors necessary for any company to win in the wireless revolution. Beyond WAPPcceleration will provide strategic knowledge to CEOs, corporate planners, business analysts, marketing managers, sales executives, manufacturers, service specialists, CIOs, IT professionals, application developers and entrepreneurs.

I demo "i-mode" with NTT DoCoMo's Takeshi Natsuno. With over 24-million subscribers, NTT DoCoMo's i-mode service is the industry leader and the paradigm for all the world's telcos. Learn from Takeshi Natsuno, executive director of NTT DoCoMo's Gateway Business Department as he shares the proven strategies of the world's most successful wireless service. Mr. Natsuno oversees the strategic alliances for i-mode with application/content providers and key players in the Internet industry worldwide. Plus, get a preview of FOMA (Freedom of Mobile Multimedia Access) the world's first 3G service.

Technology strategists and best-selling author Peter Cohan will discuss how wireless technology is changing the way we live and work today. Cohan's management consulting firm has helped clients — many of them global leaders in telecommunications, computer networking, systems integration and semiconductors — to identify, evaluate and profit from new business opportunities created by changing technology. A venture capitalist, Cohan is building a growing portfolio of Internet venture investments.

A frequent speaker and TV commentator on high technology, Cohan has authored four books: *e-stocks: Finding the Hidden Blue Chips Among the Internet Imposters*; *e-Profit: High Payoff Strategies for Capturing the E-Commerce Edge*; *Net Profit: How to Invest and Compete in the Real World of Internet Business*; and *The Technology Leaders: How America's Most Profitable High-Tech Companies Innovate Their Way to Success*.

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Creba national convention: Part of GMA's healing mission

BY CHARLIE V. GORAYEB
National President, Chamber of Real Estate & Builders Associations

IN CONFRONTING the challenge of "healing a wounded nation," the Macapagal administration does not attempt to go about it by making big promises. But it is taking every conceivable step and adopting every practical, realistic measure to achieve its goal.

In the provision of housing for the people, for instance, Secretary Michael T. Defensor of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), in a message to Creba during a recent monthly business meeting, announced that the President "has put himself on the line in the massive task of providing housing to the homeless," and is calling on the private sector to "put ourselves also

on the line for this noble task."

The forthcoming Creba 2001 National Convention in Bacolod City on Oct. 25-27, is part of the chamber's response to the challenge of putting ourselves on the line and thus contributing to this effort of healing the nation.

The Creba convention is designed as a national forum through which the stakeholders in the housing and real estate sector will identify and address current housing issues.

The Creba, it will be recalled, has packaged a comprehensive home financing scheme aimed at gradually lifting the backlog of housing units estimated at 4.5 million units and still growing.

As the legitimate sounding board of the industry, Creba maintains that housing, with its overall impact on other sectors and job-generating

impetus, holds a major key to healing the industry, the economy and the nation. The convention and its agenda constitute a response of every Creba member to the call of the Macapagal administration for greater private sector participation in the formulation of a national vision.

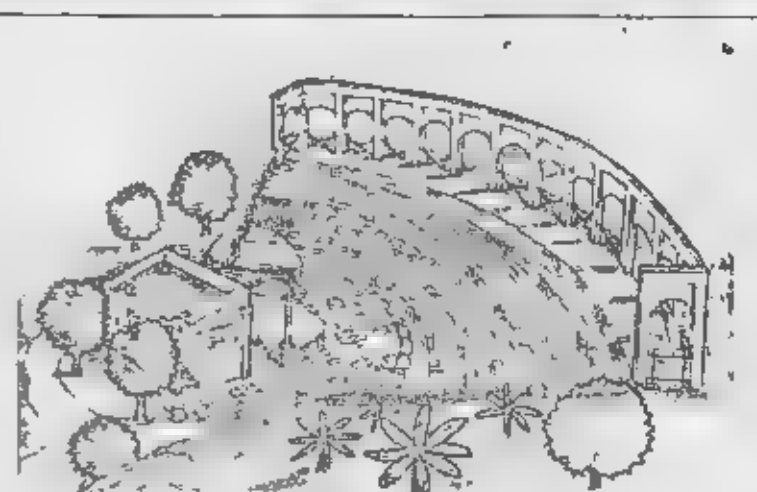
The convention program has been well-trimmed, focusing only on the most critical issues, while retaining the annual treats and opportunities that developers look forward to, such as the dialogue with the housing agencies. It provides the time and occasion for them to redress their grievances and voice out their sentiments. Off the formal session halls, ample time is assured for fellowship as is usual for a gathering of this kind.

As a convention site, Bacolod City itself assures participants of utmost

relaxing atmosphere. After all, the Bacolod charm is her people, smiling, fun-loving, zestful and flowing with optimism, in good times or bad.

This is the most well-known Bacolod brand of hospitality whose warmth, sincerity and natural friendliness can make every visitor come again to this Visayan city and its environs. All this certainly will provide the proper atmosphere for a fruitful national convention for the industry.

During this healing process, and during each and every step of the way to national recovery, Creba will help ensure that the voice of the housing sector will be heard. It hopes that its proposals for a sustainable housing program will be adopted to enable the industry to do its share in alleviating the plight of the nation's homeless families.



PLACE FOR WORSHIP SERVICES

Leading property developer Crown Asia has laid the groundwork for an ecumenical center inside Main Aita, its premiere subdivision in Antipolo City. The center's amphitheater and stage provide residents with a place for worship services of their particular religion and the nearby tree park and lagoon make it an ideal promenade area and a place for contemplation.

Laguna BelAir III sets new trends

HOUSING developer Empire East Land Holdings Inc. has set new standards for community living with new model homes and new recreational amenities showcased in its Laguna BelAir III development, an expansion phase of the popular township located in one of the fastest-growing centers of the Calabarzon.

In Laguna BelAir III, part of a master-planned community offering a well-balanced lifestyle, homebuyers can choose from house and lot packages and individual home lots within a 63-hectare area.

The all new model homes are Audrey, Brenna, Chloe and Daphne, along with Francine II, Denise II and Corinne II, which are improved versions of three existing classic models. All seven model units come in bungalow or two-story layouts. Fully furnished and standard unfinished versions of the new model homes may be viewed at the site.

The new home features include an entrance porch, provision for fences and a carport, bigger bedrooms and living areas, improved ceiling height, additional upper floor toilet and bath, enhanced kitchen layout and laundry sink and powder room at the ground floor. An additional maid's room is available for the 79-sq.-m Chloe and 105 sq.-m Daphne models.

The classic Francine II (84 sq. m), Denise II (72 sq. m) and Corinne II (72 sq. m) all come in three-bedroom packages. Audrey (51 sq. m) and Brenna (72 sq. m) come with two and three bedrooms, respectively.

Given Laguna BelAir III a year-round vacation resort feeling is a two-hectare leisure park, featuring luxurious landscaping, a flower and butterfly garden, an aviary, picnic huts, children's playground, putting greens, mini-parks, a jogging trail, covered walkway, trellis,

an elevated view deck, a pavilion, porte-cochere, a learning resource center and a man-made lagoon outfitted with a boat quay for boating and fishing activities.

Pocket gardens and perimeter plantings abound in keeping with the township park-like theme. The 20-meter-wide main road is dotted with trees while secondary roads are lined with plant strips. Houses are given adequate setback for lawns, front gardens and perimeter trimmings.

As in any other Empire East project, homeowners get to have peace of mind because of the controlled gate access, round-the-clock security measures and pedestrian-friendly thoroughfares.

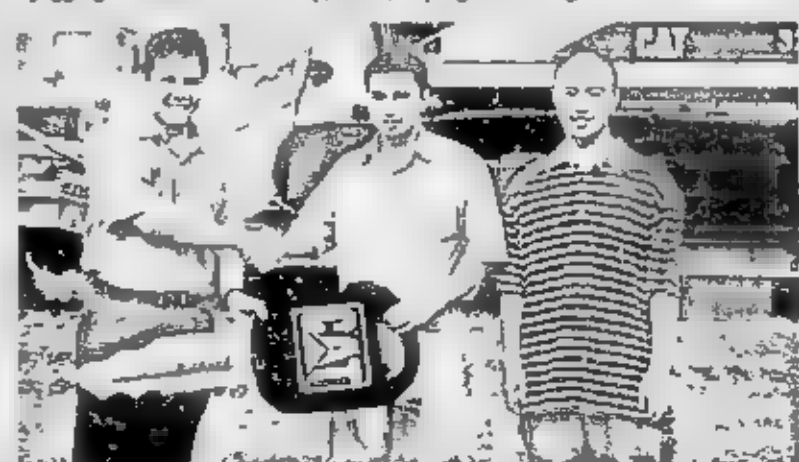
Both main roads and secondary roads are well-illuminated at night. Traffic safety signs, humps and highly visible street names are standard in Laguna BelAir.

Reliable services

High-caliber infrastructure, utilities and maintenance facilities address residents' needs for reliable community services. Each unit comes equipped with provisions for two telephone lines and for cable TV installation. An elevated water tank and a deep-well reservoir assure ample water supply. A power substation services the entire township and guarantees uninterrupted power supply.

For the convenience of all residents, the Laguna BelAir School, a top-notch learning institution with its mathematics and science-intensive curriculum, and a soon-to-be-completed chapel are among the family-friendly amenities thoughtfully built into the township.

Bounded by Sta. Rosa and Biñan, Laguna BelAir III is easily accessible through the Mampisan and Sta. Rosa exits. A big plus for homeowners is its strategic location inside the Calabarzon growth corridor and nearness to progressive Laguna towns.



CEREMONIAL TURNOVER

As part of its P50-million equipment upgrading program, Satrap Construction, rated as a triple "A" contractor, recently took delivery of their second brand-new Caterpillar 320CL Hydraulic Excavator from Monark. Monark is the sole dealer of Caterpillar in the Philippines. Monark manager Manny Martin, left, turns over the ceremonial key to Satrap CEO Ronald V. Singson and VP Ryan V. Singson.

Georgetown completes roadwork, power supply

ALL utilities—from its power supply, state-of-the-art water system, to its roadwork—are now fully in place at Georgetown Lakeview Vacation Estate in Metro Tagaytay.

"Georgetown is already 95 percent complete. We are just finishing the construction of our perimeter fences and adding the final touches to our clubhouse," Georgetown marketing director Sil Mendoza disclosed.

Georgetown is an exclusive community for weekend vacationers, retirees and families in search for a relaxing home away from home. Its current clientele includes professionals and balikbayans.

Mendoza said that Georgetown is slated to open its 800-sq.-m clubhouse (which will be for the exclusive use of homeowners) in August. The place offers modern amenities such as a fitness facility, a heated indoor swimming pool, a game room and a viewing deck perfect for both recreation and relaxation. "By September, our basketball and tennis courts will also be finished," he said.

He added that 20 houses are up for construction this year, with over 50 percent of the estate's lots already sold.

Georgetown offers a deferred payment system under flexible terms in its various packages. Prime lots are available at around P7,250 per square meter, while average lots are sold at around P6,750 per square meter. Interested parties may call 810-0374 or visit www.georgetown.com.ph or e-mail FGV1@sf.com.ph for more information.

The 25-hectare vacation paradise provides American country-style homes to choose from where homeowners can enjoy a guaranteed unobstructed view of the magnificent Taal Lake and Volcano. This includes the recently inaugurated Cedarbrook and Rosewood Manor.

The Cedarbrook is a posh three-floor structure that sits on 386.7-sq.-m lot with a floor area of 435 sq. m. It has four cozy bedrooms, a 2-car garage, driver's quarter, powder room, balcony and a comfy fireplace perfect for Tagaytay's highland climate. The Rosewood Manor, on the other hand, occupies a lot area of 391 sq. m with a floor area of 312.7 sq. m. It has three bedrooms, a powder room, 2-car garage, driver's quarter, maid's room, fireplace, balcony and terrace that offers a perfect view of the Tagaytay vista.

A few hours' drive away from Manila, Georgetown Lakeview Vacation Estate offers the perfect spot to de-stress from the frenzied pace of urban living.



GSIS HOUSING DESIGN TILT

Government Service Insurance System general manager Winston Garcia, left, and other officials look over the design of architect Samuel D. Gasmen, right, that won one of the 3 slots under the P350,000 housing design competition during the recent GSIS 64th anniversary program. Gasmen's winning entry was submitted with former banker Rommel A. Domingo as co-participant. This entry and other winning designs for the P150,000, P250,000 and P450,000 categories will be available for GSIS members applying for housing loans.

Greenwoods Batangas adds 70 more hectares

THE ROAD to Batangas is becoming well-traveled these days, particularly with improved access via the Manila-Batangas link Southern Tagalog Arterial Road (Star) highway. Attracting more than the heretofore leisure-oriented trollers to the province, Batangas' middle-class- and business-sector-led growth has also driven up demand for housing, prompting responsive Sta. Lucia Realty and Development Inc. to add 70 more hectares to its 40-hectare Greenwoods Residential Estates.

The 70 hectares will greatly improve the already impressive appointments of the residential enclave with its modern amenities and master-planned community. The addition guaranteed a multipurpose clubhouse and sports complex, basketball and tennis courts, swimming pool and gym for men and women for the active movers of Batangas. A wide 12-meter avenue, 8-meter-wide secondary streets, concrete curbs and gutters address the need to provide for the expected bigger community.

Said Exequiel Robles, president of Sta. Lucia Realty: "The city streets are gradually up with traffic, what with Batangas residents and their guests going about their businesses more frequently, and more people from elsewhere relocating to the city. Although Batangas is far from reaching the point of congestion Manila

has grown to and the city fathers will definitely be zealous about retaining open spaces and wider thoroughfares, we felt we should hedge against the urban crawl with a leisurely pace within our walls. Our wider roads are intended to address any traffic problems we may expect with more people setting up homes at Greenwoods."

More important, Greenwoods has a play and bicycle-friendly environment, which means more open spaces, landscaping, sidewalks, parks and common gardens.

Said Robles: "Space is precious within and outside the home and we intend to provide for this real need which is often sacrificed to maximize land use and by virtue of economy. Batangas' growth is inevitable given the hardness of its people. It's about time, we felt, that most provinces like Batangas come into their own and capitalize on their own riches to offer the rest of the country and the world."

He added: "We'd like to think we are partners in that growth community-wise. If we're providing them big rewards for their toil by way of satisfying their housing needs, we feel we've accomplished much as a developer. We're willing to add some more hectares to provide them more value for their hard-earned money. It's an investment that's bound to benefit everyone all around."



TOP FIRM DESIGNS WORLD-CLASS CLUBHOUSE

Jubilation, a breakthrough township in Biñan, Laguna, will feature "Prasadiya," a world-class clubhouse designed by Mañosa & Partners. Owner-developer of Jubilation is Earth+Style Corp. Victor H. Manalang (in coat and tie), Earth+Style president and CEO, said the 155-hectare Jubilation's project concept is a fusion of the best of Asian architectural styles. Designed using the revolutionary principles of "New Urbanism," Jubilation as a first-class environment promises to be a seamless township that can easily blend with its surrounding area even as it retains self-containment as a community. Also shown is architect Francisco Mañosa.

Real estate selling: Aspects and challenges

BY FLORENTINO S. DULALIA JR.

MARKETING, one of the most dynamic businesses in any industry, is one of the basic and oldest trades in history. Our ancestors, before any form of currency was invented, bartered goods to acquire what they need. As soon as currency was used, the form of marketing became more complex.

The marketing practice evolved out of the satisfaction of our wants and needs. Since shelter is one of our basic needs, real estate marketing grew to be one of the most in demand and stable industries in the country.

Real estate brokers

In view of the evolving complexities of real estate transactions and since real estate industry is one of the most lucrative businesses in the country, specialist dealing with property marketing, development, and appraisals and any other aspect of real estate grew and thrived. Those people, acquiring vast knowledge and expertise in real estate through their experience, are sought for their professional guidance and advice. Thus, out of the need for professionals who can deal with complexities of real estate transaction and procedures, the concept of real estate

professionals emerged.

Marketing a property through experienced licensed real estate professionals (licensed brokers or agents) can simplify the process of real estate sales. Among the services/advantages being offered by licensed brokers/agents are the insurance of public protection through the legality of the transaction, help in the establishment of a fair asking price; promotion of the property to other fellow brokers/agents, can list properties in multiple listing services which is internationally accessible by both real estate practitioners and buyers; create, pay for and place advertising and can coordinate tripping appointments.

Real estate selling

There are many different factors affecting the salability of a property. If one were planning to sell a property or planning to have a career in real estate brokerage and marketing, it would be beneficial to familiarize oneself with these different factors.

The price would be the most important and determining factor in real estate selling. A fair and competitive price for the property should be set if one wants the property to be sold in a short time. Real estate brokers/appraisers and consultants can provide

marketing analysis and advice and can show a client the recent selling prices of neighborhood properties.

Another important factor would be the terms of payment for the property being sold. Flexible and easy terms of payment will attract more buyers.

Property exposure and marketing is also one of the important factors in real estate selling. The exposure to a large number of qualified buyers through advertisements and most importantly, the recruitment and maintenance a network of experienced brokers and agents who will present the property to their numerous clients is undeniably an important factor in selling properties. Studies have investigated and affirmed these marketing techniques.

Aside from the above-mentioned factors, the location, accessibility and amenities of property along with the property's condition and the availability/accessibility of the property for viewing can also significantly affect the buyer's decision to buy.

Furthermore, the market conditions (hot or cold market, interest rates, employment and growth rate, and consumer's confidence and purchasing power) and competition or other properties for sale have also been known to affect the salability

of the property.

Challenges ahead

With the weakening peso and the resulting economic crisis, the real estate industry reflects a slower pace of sales and growth. Thus, a real estate broker faces a challenge in marketing real estates despite the unencouraging economic condition and decreasing purchasing power of prospective buyers.

But it seems that the real estate brokers are still confident and unworried about the future. They seem to be ready and equipped for any challenges. At present, they are gearing themselves up with the use of technology (multitasking and internet/global marketing), and still aim and are working on the simplification of selling/purchasing process and laboring for a more accessible terms hoping to provide a complete service toward more accessible, affordable quality housing for all.

(The writer is president of both the Realty Service Council of the Philippines (Rescop) and the Philippine Association of Realty Consultants and Specialists. Rescop is an umbrella organization of national realty associations. For more information, log on to <http://www.philbizpages.com/rescop/index.htm>, or e-mail at rescop@philbizpages.com or call 896-3788 or 927-0120.)

REAL ESTATE

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

Real property analysis to 'downgrade' forecast

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

If there's anything positive in the real property market outlook, it is its "bottoming out," which means things can't go further down much more.

This was the statement made by Colliers Jardine Philippines' research division, which analyzes Philippine property market conditions and forecasts, when asked if there would be anything positive the real estate market could look forward to.

Bottoming out

CJ's research division manager Richard Raymundo, in a phone interview, said CJ's theme for the property market this second quarter was bottoming out, or "bagsak presyo." For the second quarter CJ would downgrade its forecast, especially for the office take-up.

For Makati, he observed that if the first quarter performance seemed to lead to a 90,000-sq.-m market absorption for the whole 2001, the downgrading would mean just about 75 to 70,000 sq. m for the whole year.

The take-up or market absorption is basically

the total floor area or new units absorbed by the market for the year.

Oversupply, economic and political uncertainties are some of the factors that CJ has mentioned for the flat rents and prices for the next 12 months.

"Everything, from the offices to the big expensive residential ones, will have a hard time because the supply is just too great," said Raymundo.

CJ's Philippine property market situationer for the second quarter (April to June) will be out in two weeks.

"If you're looking at anything positive on the second quarter, it's bottoming out. But even if prices and rents are down, it doesn't mean that we have a fast recovery going for us," said Raymundo.

No significant effect

Asked what the effects of the depreciating peso and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (Sona) would have in the near future for the real estate market, he said that these would have no significant effect because the market was dictated by supply. The factors that matter are consumer and business confidence.

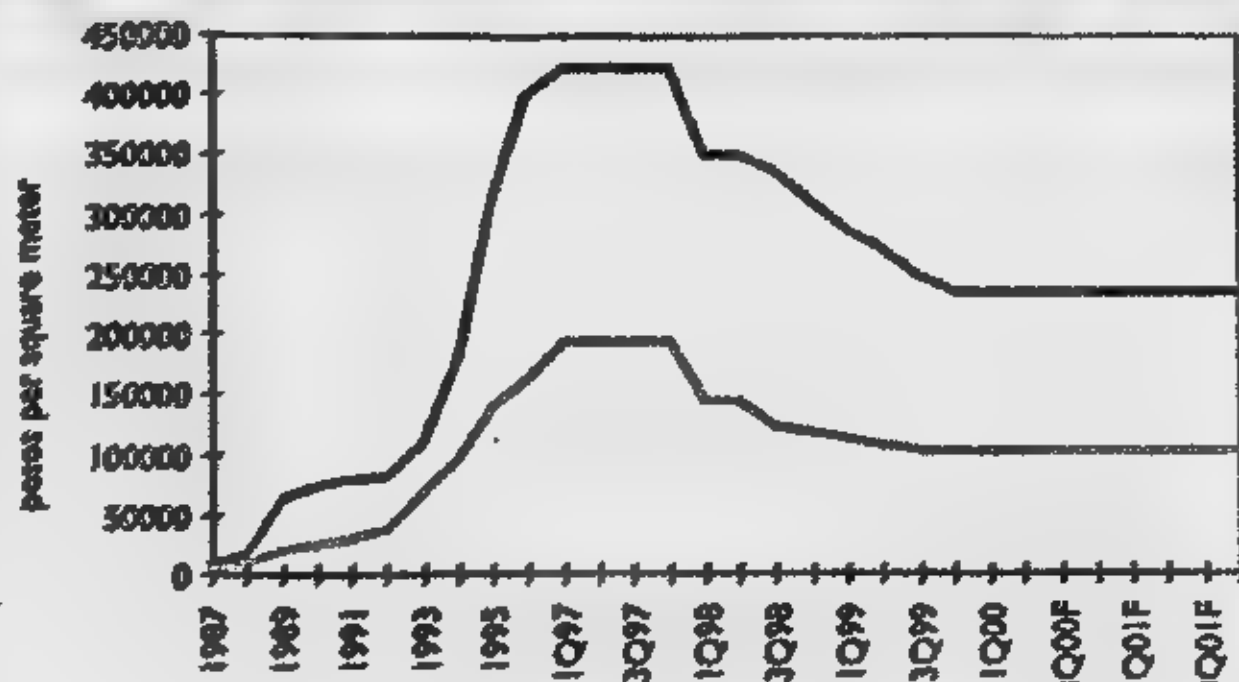
"Hopefully business confidence improves in the next six months," he said.

"If you are a businessman, now is the time to move because it's cheap. But the question is, could you sustain the business? Will your business contract or expand? It's still a matter of business confidence and consumer confidence at this point."

First quarter analysis

Meanwhile, CJ's first quarter analysis

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estimated prime lots in the Makati Central Business district to have an average value of P209,640 per square meter, a further decline of 6 percent quarter to quarter. Prime CBD land was estimated to be worth half the value of 1997 levels. CJ further expects CBD values to correct by 14 percent to the trough average of P180,000 per square meter by the end of third quarter 2001.

CJ has further downgraded its land values for Ortigas by nearly 6 percent quarter on quarter. The average land value for development sites in the secondary business district is estimated at an average of P92,890 per square meter or a 52 percent discount off peak.

"We expect Ortigas land values to further tumble by 14 percent before

settling at its trough of P80,000 per square meter at the end of 3Q 2001," stated a CJ analysis.

CJ said that land transactions continue to be scarce. "Liquidity constraints" and the "exuberance to purchase developable land" in the mid-1990s have led property developers to significantly curtail landbanking efforts. As a result, CJ said that most developments following the 1997 crisis have been on a joint-venture agreement with landowners.

The first quarter saw the housing sector posting a 44-percent year-on-year increase to 21,323 compared to last year, but its increase was credited for the low base comparison last year. There were only 6,612 mid-income units built in the

first quarter of 2000.

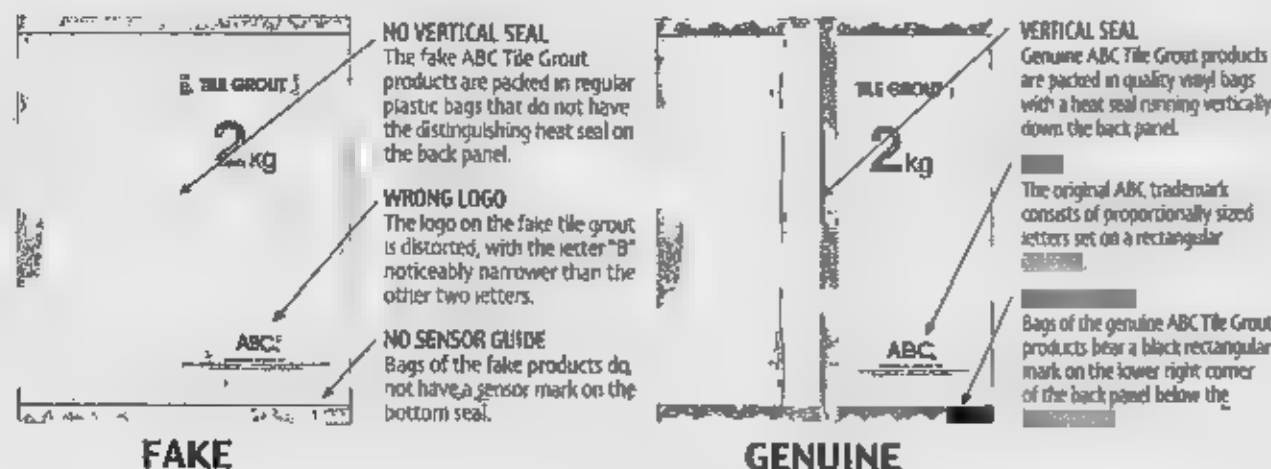
Nevertheless, the first quarter showed a 90-percent increase in mid-income projects, resulting in 12,548 units built. Other notable mid-income projects approved for sale are Sunny Brook Ph3 (Filinvest Land, 213 units), Grosvenor Place Ph1 A, Robinsons Land, 282 units) and Villagio Ignatius (Earth and Style, 1,633 units). High-rise residential condos increased 41 percent year on year to 1,060 units. CJ stated that this was still below the five-year average of 3,706 units per quarter.

Approval of socialized housing units increased by nearly 11 percent to 4,278 units. The 3,437 low-cost housing units approved was a 5-percent year on year decline.

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Housing borrowers get P2B in loan relief

ECONOMICALLY distressed housing borrowers have received a total of P2.18 billion in loan-relief assistance from the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. through the agency's implementation of Republic Act 8501, the Housing Loan Condonation Act of 1998, according to lawyer Angelico T. Salud, NHMFC president.

Salud said that as of last month, a total of 37,273 housing loan beneficiaries, who availed themselves of the agency's various loan payment updating schemes, received the assistance in the form of loan penalties condoned.

"This is in compliance with the policy initiatives set by Secretary Defensor (of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council) for the launch of intensified loan collection campaigns by housing agencies to recover government housing investments while at the same time provide delinquent beneficiaries with affordable loan refinancing schemes with waiver of penalties as repayment incentive," Salud said.

Covered by the loan penalty condonation program, implemented since March 1998, are borrowers under the NHMFC's Community Mortgage Program (CMP), Unified Home Lending Program, and Folio 1 (Old Pag-Ibig/Open-housing loan) program.

Low-income borrowers, particularly marginalized informal settlers who obtained the CMP loans have hailed Defensor's active implementation of the Housing Loan Condonation Act of 1998 as "timely and responsive to the plight of beneficiaries under the prevailing economic conditions."

Salud also said that the NHMFC has adopted a number of loan collection strategies to increase its collection efficiency and improve the quality of its loan portfolio meant to effect upward movements in loan account classification, active foreclosure of "hard-core" delinquent accounts as well as through the provision of rental schemes for and active disposition of acquired housing assets.

Eastwood Lafayette 1 nearing completion

LEADING urban developer Megaworld Corp. has announced the forthcoming completion of Eastwood Lafayette 1, part of a 3-building residential development now rising in Eastwood City.

The 19-story building has been painted and the podium's granite facade and exterior windows have been substantially completed.

Floor-by-floor architectural finishing works have reached the 19th floor while the electro-mechanical works are being fast-tracked.

Stated for completion by the fourth quarter of this year, Eastwood Lafayette 1 features a neo-classical design and amenities that include a five-star-hotel standard lobby, a gym and a laundromat.



LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

fitness



What does being fit really mean?

IT'S sad that many people only think about a lean and toned body as a sign of "being fit" because they miss out on the real meaning of fitness. But I am not surprised that this is the image that comes to mind because these are the kinds of bodies that are always being used in ads for gyms or fitness equipment. It is true that a body with hard, firm muscles and hardly any fat can be one of the signs of being fit, but it is not true that you have to look like that to be considered fit.

So what does "being fit" really mean? This is an important question because people either try too hard to be in shape and injure themselves since they think they have to look a certain way or people don't even bother trying to get in shape since they believe they can never achieve that "look."

Actually, being fit does not have much to do with how your body looks but has everything to do with how your body performs. To start off, here are several textbook definitions of fitness:

- "The ability to execute a given task effectively and safely." ("Facts & Fallacies of Fitness");
- "The capacity to achieve the optimal quality of life." ("Fitness Leaders Handbook");
- "The condition resulting from a lifestyle that leads to the development of an optimal level of cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and flexibility, as well as the achievement and maintenance of ideal body weight." ("American Council on Exercise Personal Trainer Manual").

The 5 factors of fitness

A more complete definition of fitness comes from the book "Physiotherapy" by Christopher Norris. It is easy to remember them as the 5 factors: Stamina, suppleness (flexibility), strength, speed (rate of movement and power), skill (athletic and motor), specificity (what you need to be fit for) and spirit (psychological aspect).

Being fit means having all these factors at a level that is necessary for your lifestyle and goals. An Olympic-class athlete requires a different level of fitness compared to someone who only plays a weekend sport. But no matter how sedentary your lifestyle is, you should, at the very least, have enough stamina, strength, suppleness and all the other 3 factors to be able to do your activities of daily living without getting fatigued or injured. This is called functional fitness. You should also, at the very least, be fit enough to stay healthy and prevent lifestyle diseases like diabetes, hy-

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Aboitiz Juan



Many either injure themselves by trying to be in shape or don't even bother to get in shape believing they can never achieve a certain look

hypertension, stroke, heart conditions, etc.

Health versus fitness

Good health and fitness do not always go together. As paradoxical as it may sound, you can actually be fit and unhealthy or healthy and unfit. Before you get all confused, let me explain. If health is defined as the absence of disease and fitness is defined as the ability to do a given task effectively and safely, then it is possible for someone who lifts weights and has strong muscles to have clogged arteries. This could be a result of bad genes, poor diet, smoking, high stress levels, etc. On the other hand, it is possible for someone with weak and flabby muscles (because they don't lift weights) to have clean and healthy arteries. This could be a result of good genes and a healthy lifestyle (nutritious diet, no smoking, low stress levels, etc.).

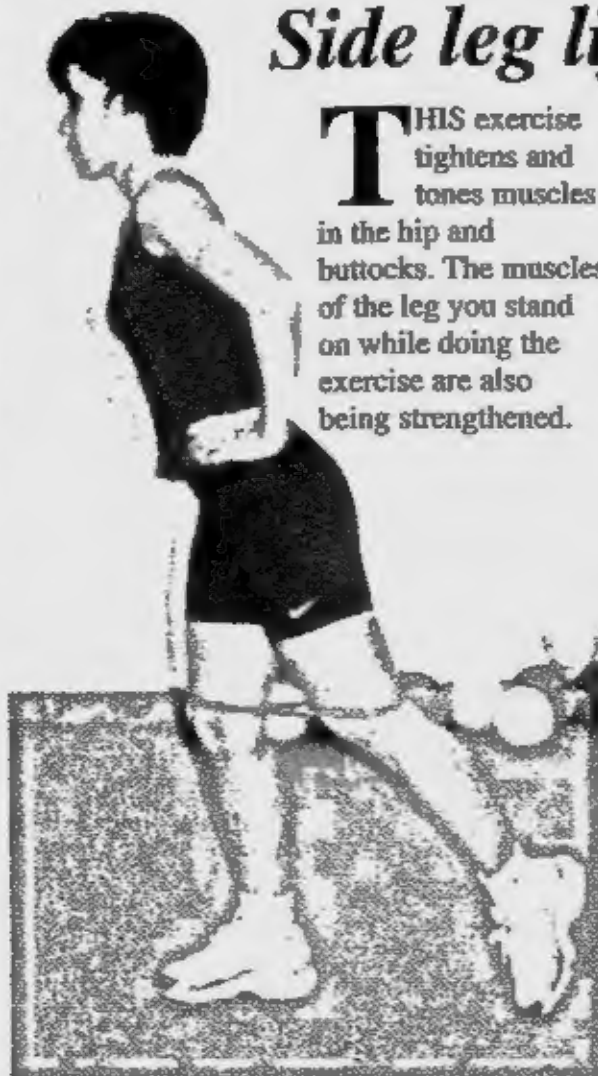
Drug, supplement and herbal abuse can also explain how someone can be fit and unhealthy. Thus there are cases of superbly fit athletes dying of heart or liver ailments. I remember a fitness instructor who was taking steroids and was constantly on a high-protein, low carbohydrate diet to maintain her "six-pack" abdomen and her extremely lean body. She was always down with a cold and eventually caught pneumonia. Ironically, even though she was very fit, she was less healthy than her unfit clients.

Generally speaking, however, fit people live longer than unfit people, according to studies done by the Cooper Institute for Aerobic Research. Head researcher Stephen Blair found that physically fit men are 53 percent less at risk of premature death than sedentary men while physically fit women are 98 percent

WHAT? p.C2

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Side leg lift with rubber band



THIS exercise tightens and tones muscles in the hip and buttocks. The muscles of the leg you stand on while doing the exercise are also being strengthened.

Equipment:
Rubber band tied above the knees.

Exercise technique:

1. Stand holding a wall or back of a sturdy chair if you feel you need help with your balance.
2. Lift your right leg sideways to about 45 degrees.
3. Slowly lower down.
4. Do the desired number of

repetitions, then switch sides.

Performance tips:

1. Keep the toes and knee of the leg you are lifting facing forward. If you rotate your leg so the toes and knee are facing the ceiling, you will work the front of the thighs instead of the hip.
2. If you are using a wall or chair to steady your balance, hold it lightly and avoid leaning onto it.
3. Avoid swinging the leg sideways. Move slowly by contracting the muscle first.
4. Keep your shoulders facing forward throughout the exercise. Avoid rotating at the waist.

Repetitions:

Do 12-15 repetitions on each leg. This equals one set. Do one to three sets.

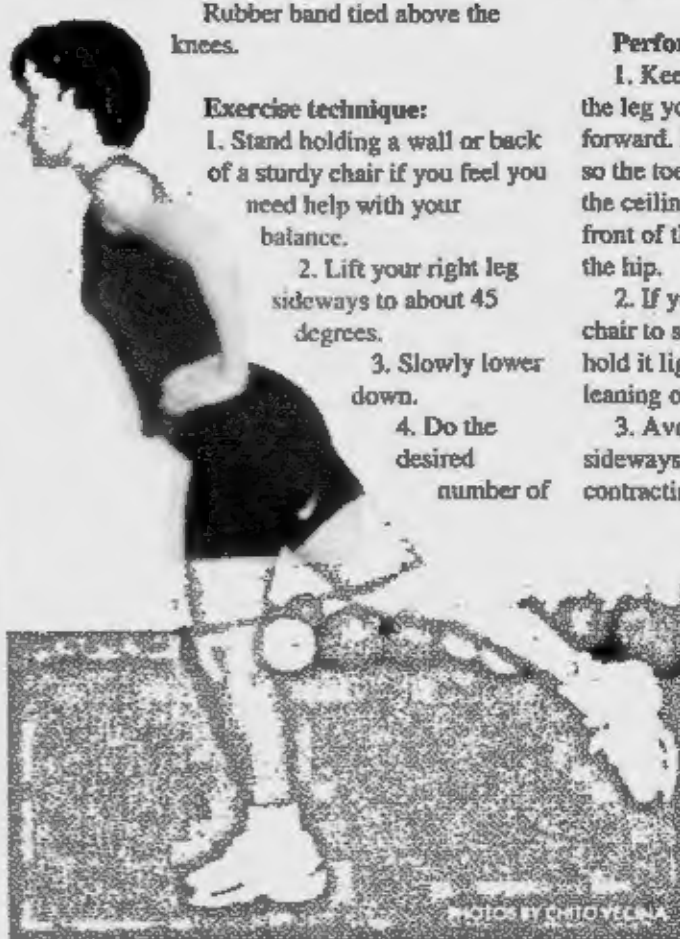


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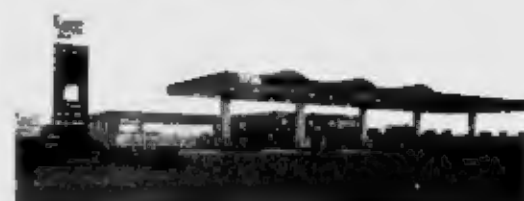
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Treatment based on electronic evidence

What does ...

(From page C1)

BY CATHY BABAO GUBALLA

INTUITION used to be a doctor's greatest ally. When prescribing medicine or diagnosing an illness, a doctor simply needed to trust his gut and rely on what he or she had learned in medical school. The "browse" method, where a doctor would read about some rare disease in a journal and hope that he would come across it in his lifetime, was the practice back then.

Nowadays, the call of the times is to teach would-be doctors information-seeking behavior or what is more appropriately called in medical jargon as Evidence Based Medicine (EBM). Dr. Tony Dans, chair of the Medical Research Council at the Department of Internal Medicine in the UP College of Medicine, is a cardiologist-internist-epidemiologist all rolled into one. He pioneered EBM in the country in 1991.

Epidemiology is the branch of medicine that deals with the incidence and prevalence of disease in large populations and with the detection of the source and cause of epidemics of infectious diseases. "Doctors need to cope with a lot of information now and the questions students ask are becoming harder. Lecturers need to come prepared," says Dans, who holds a master's degree in clinical epidemiology from McMaster University Medical Center in Canada.

"The browse method is no longer feasible owing to the amount of information that is available from books, lectures, journals and the Net. A doctor's intuition should be supported by medical evidence," Dans emphasizes. However, he does not discount the importance of intuition. "In some cases, there really is no evidence to back you up. In that case, you go with your intuition."

Modern training

Dans says that a paradigm shift has led to a different way of teaching medicine. "Previously, one had all the answers or, at least, students would assume that the professor would know all the answers. Nowadays, one must know *how* to ask the right questions and we want the faculty to say, 'Let's take a look at this,' or, 'I haven't seen this.'" He further stresses that it takes a certain amount of humility for a doctor to say that not everything he thinks works will actually work. "That's why it's important to have the evidence to back you up," he emphasizes. Thus, EBM has now been incorporated in the medical residents' training program in medical schools all over the country.

EBM, Dans explains, is a four-step process. First, the doctor poses a question. For example, "Is this drug good for my patient?", or, "Is this test necessary for my patient?" Secondly, the doctor seeks information. Once he has found it, he criticizes and filters the information that is available, which is the third step. Dans says there is a lot of trash on the information super-highway or even in medical journals. "One needs to be quite critical and discerning," he adds. The final step in EBM is the most important one; naturally, the doctor needs to make an informed and wise decision.

Medical Resource Centers (MRCs), which Merck Sharpe and Dohme (MSD) has set up in several hospitals all over the country, are critical to the EBM process. "They meet the need in step two, which is information seeking," Dans says.

According to Christine Liwanag, MSD's director for professional services, MSD's managing director Mick Harris started putting up an MRC in the Philippines upon realizing that "a resource center was very ideal for the country." Liwanag explains that the centers are helpful to doctors who need to refer to some resource materials. The MRC also conducts tedious literature researches.

The center's library provides the latest medical journals and literature, learning slides, audio-visual materials, CD-ROM data-search resources such as Medline, and other facilities for the use of doctors. Currently, there are MRCs at the Philippine General Hospital, Medical Towers Makati, Philippine Heart Center, National Orthopedic Hospital, and provincial MRCs in Batangas, Bicol, Cebu and Davao.

Dans adds that the accessibility and availability of necessary information can significantly help in the management of a patient's condition. Of particular value are the information tracking system and databases that quickly help a researcher locate the abstract or general con-



SHERLOCK HOLMES. Dr. Tony Dans at the MSD Resource Center in PGH

PHOTO BY JOHNNY VILLENA

Medical Resource Centers have been set up in several Philippine hospitals by Merck Sharpe and Dohme to make information more accessible to doctors and their patients

tent of an important study. According to him, these facilities help save a lot of time for both patient and doctor, and helps produce quicker, more productive searches.

Admittedly, Dans says, there has been some reluctance on the part of some doctors to adopt EBM. For one, the access to electronic information isn't universal; secondly, some doctors find it difficult to accept that their intuition can be wrong. Lastly, criticizing the literature available can be difficult for other people. "This is really the call of the times," Dans says. "We are trying to role-model information-seeking and asking a lot of questions, rather than giving all the answers."

In an age where new strains of viruses are sprouting like deadly mushrooms, or more lives are claimed by still mysterious illnesses, seeking the evidence, as Sherlock Holmes would say, becomes elementary, my dear Watson.

E-mail the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph

cent less at risk of premature death than inactive women.

How much fitness do you need to lower your risk of premature death? While this formula is not the end-all-and-be-all, this is what Blair's research found. For women, walking two miles in less than 30 minutes at least three days a week or walking two miles in 30-40 minutes five to six days a week. For men, walking two miles in less than 27 minutes at least three days a week or walking two miles in 30 to 40 minutes six to seven days a week.

Fit and fat

Because of genetic factors and eating habits, people who exercise do not always get as thin as one would expect them to be. If you are one of these people, here is some good news. You can be fit and fat. Blair analyzed the lives of about 25,000 men over the course of nearly 20 years for a study that was published in 1995 in the International Journal of Obesity. He was surprised to find that among the fit men (those who exercised regularly), the fat ones lived as long as the thinner ones. Even more surprising, the thinner men who were out of shape were nearly three times more likely to die young than fat men who exercised regularly were. In other words, it was how much regular exercise the men got rather than what they weighed that made a difference in how long they lived.

How fit do you want to be?

You need to seriously ask yourself this question because it will determine how much time and effort you will put into your exercise program. In my opinion, fitness can come in four levels depending on how fit you want to be. They are health, function, aesthetics and performance.

For bare bones health, then Blair's formula above will be enough. For optimum functional fitness, you need the same aerobic exercise formula plus the other components of muscular strength and flexibility. Twenty minutes of resistance training (an example is lifting weights) twice a week (one set of 12-15 repetitions, one exercise per body part) and stretching exercises three times a week (one stretch per body part held for 15-30 seconds).

For aesthetics results as well as higher levels of stamina, strength and flexibility, I can't give a set formula because everyone's body is different but your program could look something like this: 30-60 minutes of moderate to high intensity aerobics (walking, running, cycling, etc.) three to six times a week, one hour of resistance training three times a week, and some kind of combination strength/stretch program like Pilates or yoga once or twice a week. Needless to say, proper nutrition is very important to achieve the so-called fit look.

Being fit for performance could mean anything from recreational golf to professional basketball to Olympic swimming. Aside from a program of physical conditioning, there are also the hours of practice to reckon with. No wonder athletes are considered the elite of the fitness world.

For past articles and exercises, visit www.tinajuanfitness.com.

Fascination with the supernatural, the bizarre and the unknown



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Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.



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Meet your MEDICard Team



After earning her degree in Medicine from UST, Dr. Solita Isidro-Tadoc chose Pediatrics as her line of specialty with training from East Avenue Medical Center, graduating in 1993. She pursued further training to sub-specialize in Pediatric Nephrology from the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKT) and is affiliated to the Philippine Pediatric Society, Philippine Medical Association, Pediatric Nephrology Society of the Philippines, and Philippine Society of Nephrology. For consultations, you may visit Doc Solita at room A17 of NKT every Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 8 to 10 AM.



Dr. Imelda Olivarez-Ortega is MEDICard's accredited doctor based in Olivarez General Hospital. Doc Imelda is the wife of Dr. Neal Ortega, MEDICard's medical coordinator for the same hospital. She earned her degree in Medicine from the Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center in New York and later chose to specialize in Pediatrics, which she has been practicing for over 11 years now. You may visit Dr. Ortega for consultations at the Pedia Clinic of Olivarez General Hospital every Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 9:30 AM to 12 noon and again from 3 to 5 in the afternoon.



If you are in need of a good internist, you can visit Dr. Jesus R. Ambal at the De La Salle University Medical Center. Doc Jesus, a Medicine graduate of De La Salle College, received his training in Internal Medicine from Medical Center Manila and later pursued sub-specialization training in Pulmonology from the Lung Center of the Philippines. He currently holds membership affiliations to the Philippine College of Physicians, Philippine College of Chest Physicians and the Philippine Medical Association-Cavite Medical Society Component. For consultations, you may visit Doc Jesus from Mondays to Saturdays from 10 AM to 1 PM.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. **BE HEARD AND BE READ.** You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. HV Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For membership inquiries, please call 818-2161 and look for Ms. Joy Mendiola. TEXT MEDICard for your queries: 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEDICard could reach you. Log on to www.medicardphils.com

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STORIES of human contact with the supernatural, the strange and the unknown have always fascinated Filipinos. And the mass media, especially television programs and movies, have often depicted such encounters. And because of our natural curiosity for such stories, they always rate high in TV viewership.

Unfortunately, stories with a supernatural or paranormal theme are often treated in a superficial way or as mere horror stories. There is hardly any depth or originality of presentation. They depict almost the same old angles and ask the same old questions. Hardly any progress has been made in this genre during the last 25 years. Maybe the technical presentation, color or sound is better, and the equipment better or more modern. But the treatment of the stories remains boringly superficial and often inane.

Recently, another attempt at the same theme have been aired separately by two competing channels. One tends to be more of a horror film than the other, which tries to be serious and factual about the whole thing. But neither one takes off.

Despite good intentions the shows fall flat on their faces precisely because there's nothing new to tell. Even the one which pretends to be a documentary, à la "Sightings" or "That's Incredible," does not succeed in being credible. This is mainly because the writers did not research their subject deeply enough and hardly any explanation is given to make the events credible and understandable to the viewer.

There seems to be a reluctance to find a rational explanation for paranormal or supernatural phenomena, even if there exists some authoritative, scientific and credible explanations for them. The TV producers would rather leave it to the audience whether "to believe the story or not." This often leaves the audience with a feeling of emptiness and frustration.

This attitude prevails even in a television network known for its depth and analytical treatment of stories adopted for television. The semi-documentary film they are showing weekly about the supernatural lacks credibility.

Recently, I was interviewed by a well-known and multi-awarded female television host on the subject of faith healing and psychic surgery. At first I declined to be interviewed because I knew they would ask me the same tired questions about the subject; moreover, they were not willing to pay for my time or for the materials they usually borrow from my library for visuals.

Finally, I gave in after repeated appeals from them. I was interviewed for more than one hour by the program's host herself. She asked whether I believed psychic surgery to be genuine. I said, yes, and gave her medical laboratory proofs, both from local and foreign sources, of the genuineness of the tissues taken out of patients' bodies. I also quoted a number of international scientists, saying they were convinced of the authenticity of Philippine psychic surgery. But when the program was shown on TV, they only showed less

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licaucó



than two minutes of my interview and even chose the more trivial aspects of my statements. The medical and other scientific proofs I showed them were not mentioned at all. So the question remains whether the Philippine phenomenon of psychic surgery is genuine or not. That is how it has always stood with the public.

I do not know when television producers will wake up to the reality that the Filipino audience has changed. It now looks for explanations and in-depth research on these strange occurrences, unlike before when it only wanted entertainment. Foreign television companies are far more advanced and more realistic. They make sure they have expert advice on topics they don't understand, so they don't look foolish in the eyes of the TV audience worldwide.

For example, when Discovery Channel decided to feature Asian beliefs in the supernatural and the use of psychics for detective work, I was one of those requested to give my expert opinion on the topic under discussion. The Hong Kong-based affiliate TV company that contacted me explained that they make careful selections as to who will act as experts or resource persons to shed light on a subject. They don't interview just anybody for the program, unlike here.

In the Philippines, no expert on paranormal phenomena is ever sought when featuring stories of a paranormal nature. They merely interview anyone who may happen to encounter a supernatural event, or those who have heard it from others, and so on. The script is left without any credible explanation of why things happen as they do. Then the host will usually ask the audience at the end, "Do you think what you have seen is true or not? You be the judge."

My goodness! For how long are we going to treat our local audiences like they were morons who can't see the same worn-out treatments of the same worn-out topics year after year?

It's about time television companies raised the level of discussion on these mysterious topics. We need to turn to experts, to scientists, to researchers to shed some light on them, rather than rely on intellectually ill-equipped interviewees to provide the answers. We have enough available experts in this field, a few of whom have worldwide recognition. Why not consult them? Why not spend a little more to have a better and superior program that can truly compare with the best in the world? Why do we insist on treating in a mediocre way those things we really are very good at—such as faith healing, elementals, contacts with the dead and other supernatural phenomena?

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Seminar on healing crystals

VETERAN alternative practitioner and crystal healer Mariano Teng will introduce participants to the fascinating world of quartz crystals during Minex's seminar on "Using Crystals for Healing and Attracting Good Vibes," July 29, 2-6 p.m., at Minex Main Office, 1621 J. Bocobo St., Malate, Manila.

In a setting suffused with crystal vibrations and surrounded by huge and varied Brazilian quartz crystals, learn the basics of how to use crystals and gemstones to amplify energy, correct imbalances in the body's energy centers, heal specific physical ailments and remove negativity from the multidimensional human energy system.

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MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS



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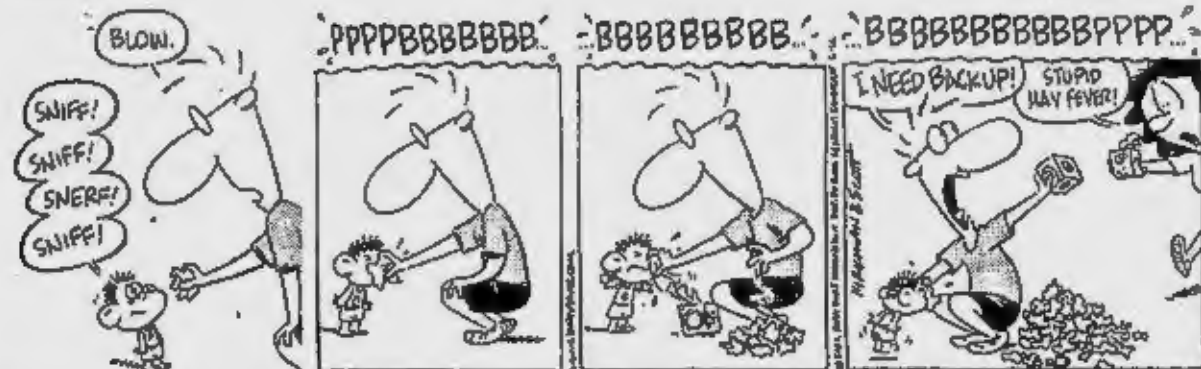
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ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your ideas will be so good that they should lead to a raise. In fact, if the money isn't offered, start looking for a boss who will appreciate your talent. You may even want to consider being your own boss.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Firm up those plans to do something special with your partner. You can make changes that will captivate your mate.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Do whatever is necessary to smooth over problems at home. A little gift, a few nice words and tenderness will help ease the tension.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You need to spend time with friends who understand your concerns and your problems. Their advice will give you some insight. After all, it's easier to view a situation from a distance.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You need to push your abilities at work. How could your talent go unnoticed? Maybe it's time to point it out to your boss. You can fulfill your creative needs by starting new hobbies.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't even think about using emotional blackmail. Your partner is so much in love with you it's not funny. Stop playing with fire and start giving back some of that warmth, or set your mate free.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't become involved in other people's affairs. Concentrate on making the necessary changes to your home. Avoid intimate relationships with clients or colleagues.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): If you participate in worthwhile activities, that person you've been fantasizing about may appear. Let the inhibitions go and be prepared to experience the time of your life.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't talk about other people unless you're looking for a dispute. Concentrate on the problems in your own backyard before chattering on about others.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You will be drifting and daydreaming to day. Book yourself on a vacation that promises a multitude of adventures. You need a break or at least a creative outlet.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Your nerves will be shot if you've allowed your partner to get to you. Look into ways of improving your surroundings, and if that means moving, then start packing.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Love is evident. You've been waiting for this passionate moment for some time now. Don't be shy, or it will pass you by. Opportunity will be knocking, so keep your eyes open.

Birthday Baby: Your carefree attitude and desire to take on the world can make you slightly reckless. Although sensitive, you are willing to test your talents as you step into the spotlight over and over again.

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA



PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR



SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA



BI GANG

BY ATSI11/JEA/FEVG



BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON



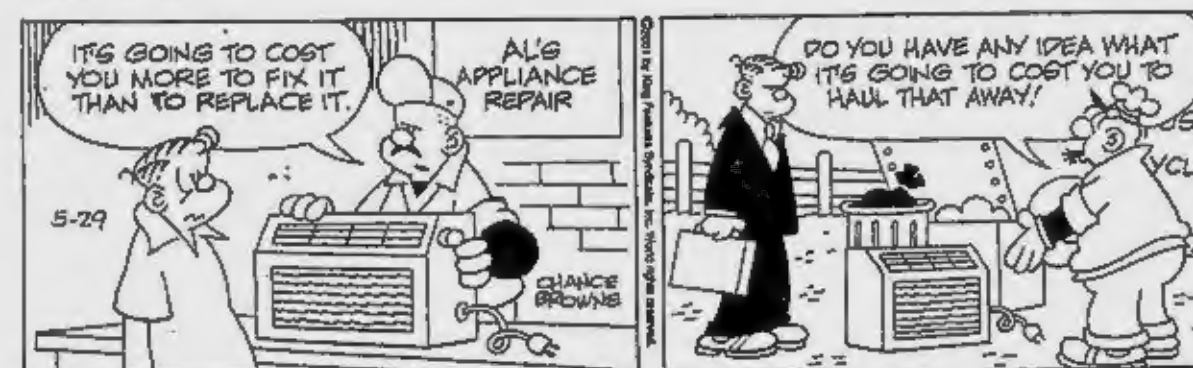
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER



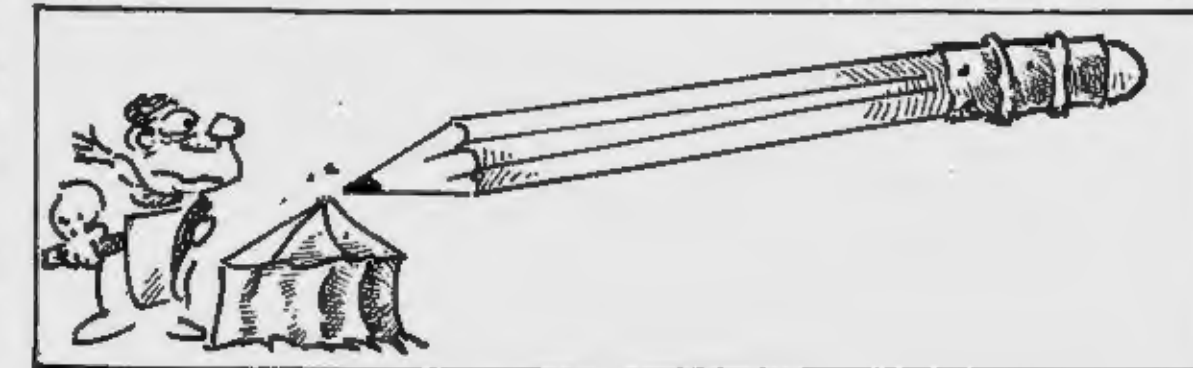
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



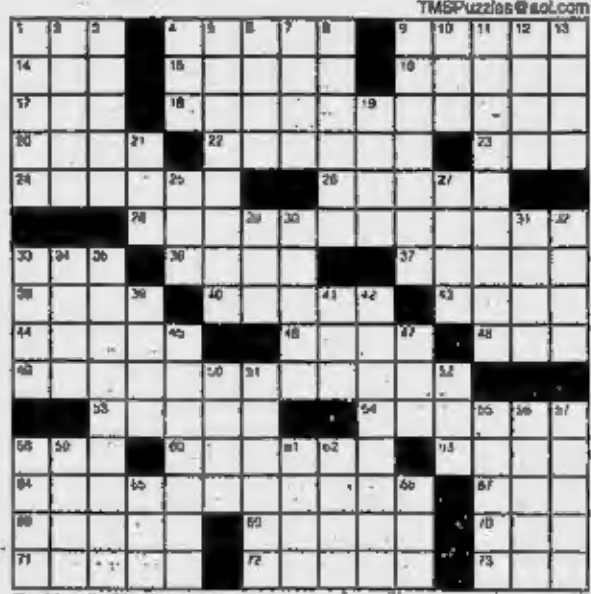
TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING



DAILY CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- Minnesota's twins?
 - Tennis shot
 - Showery month
 - Ready to go
 - Domingo
 - Adress Davis
 - Start of Lily Tomlin quote
 - Part 2 of quote
 - Mine finds
 - The Promised Land
 - Scandinavian country: abbr.
 - Take disciplinary action
 - Commutes
 - Part 3 of quote
 - Occupation
 - Jacob's twin
 - Discard
 - Noble rank
 - Of Icelandic literature
 - Sicilian eruptor
 - Stand-in
 - Religious image
 - Russ, or Lith., once
 - Part 4 of quote
 - Steel plow pioneer
 - Accused
 - Station from Tenn.
 - South Carolina river
 - Singer Amos
 - Part 5 of quote
 - End of quote
 - Birth-related
 - Blue dyes
 - UFO crew
 - Sooties
 - Hidden store
 - Cover crop



By Alan P. Olachwang
Huntington Beach, CA

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

1. OAKEN GAIN IRON
2. PHONE ALSO RACE
3. TENCAMANDMENTS
4. SAGA AUNTIE GET
5. SKIT CADEYS
6. UNSEEN SCENE
7. PET PLATO STAI
8. TWENTY QUESTIONS
9. OTTO UNDER EYA
10. VEGAS CINDER
11. BAZAAR DUPE
12. EPA SAILOR TRIO
13. THIRTY SOMETHING
14. TIRE ELSE AEBIR
15. EDEN DEED CRIE

- DOWN**
- Bar regally
 - Indian jacket style
 - Dutch painter
 - Booming jet's letters
 - Italian nobleman

- Celebes ox
- Bedazzle
- College in Geneva, NY
- Meeting plane
- Church seat
- Puts back in a slot
- Centerward
- Cowardly Lion's portrayer
- Lion's den
- Make a tap
- Haggard heroine
- Behold, Caesar
- Way cool
- Sound track
- Horn and McKellen
- Practice boxing
- Culp
- Solemn vow
- West Indies trees
- Better than never?
- Hospital letters
- Bossy's ringers
- Some engines

- Nothing at all
- Angelic and Diavolo
- Maddiesome women
- A Cole
- Societal standards
- Muse of poetry
- Scatterbrained
- Dely of 'Cagney & Lacey'
- Weather grp.
- Hue
- Director Kazan
- 'Norma'
- Gray shade